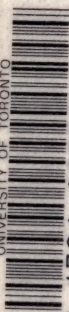


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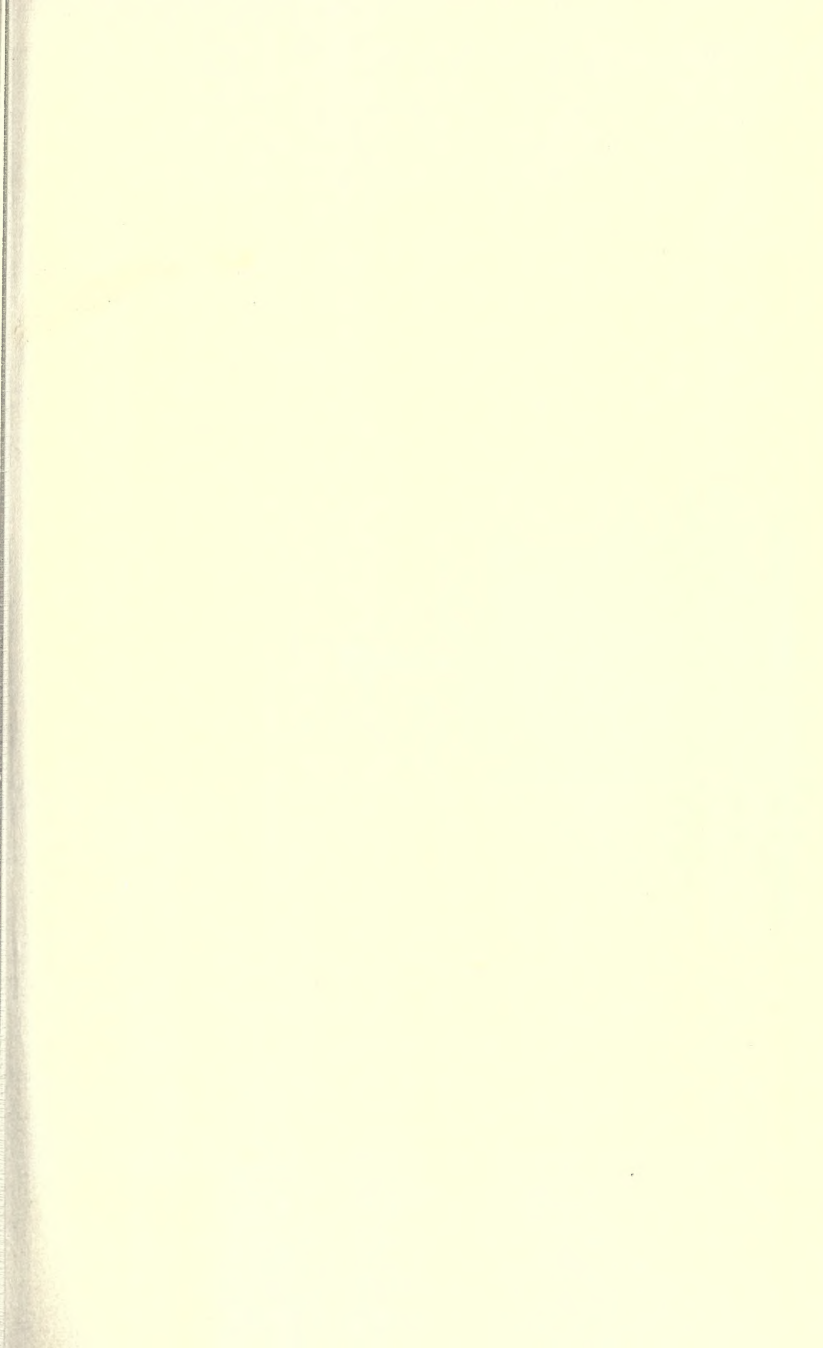
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POEMS



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# POEMS

BY  
CECIL ROBERTS

WITH A PREFACE BY  
JOHN MASEFIELD



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## PREFACE

Mr. Cecil Roberts has published several volumes of poems, each better than the last; *The Youth of Beauty*, *Twenty-six Poems*, and *Charing Cross*. Many of the poems in these volumes must already be known in America, where poetry is more eagerly read, perhaps, than in any other country in the world. I have been asked to write a few words in preface to the present volume, of his latest poems.

If I may say so, without offence, Mr. Roberts is a little like the Mysterious Stranger in a novel. One says of him (as the Count in the novel says), "He knows more of the French King than any man I ever met; yet who is he?" In conversation with him, I understood him to say that he is fifty-four years old. In conversation with a friend of his, I was told that he is twenty-five years old. For my own part, I should have said that he is somewhere between those two ages; yet it is difficult to be sure. When I think of the Mr. Roberts of real life, a very well-informed,



## PREFACE

liberally-minded, experienced journalist and war correspondent, who has seen much and many of the naval, military, and political doings and persons of the last five years, I say, with Mr. Justice Shallow, "He is old, he cannot choose but be old." When I think of the poems, I feel that he must be young; not young enough perhaps to have been carried away, or destroyed, by the recent great events, but young enough to see them clearly, to respond to them, and to realize that the tragedy of them has been the tragedy of the young, the blasting of the young, for the benefit and at the bidding of the old. That, in the main, has been the tragedy of the last two years. That, in the main, is the tragedy of Mr. Roberts' latest and best poems, in the volume here printed. For the first two years of the war the youth of the world died for their ideals. Mr. Roberts' best poems are inspired by the fear that since then the ideals may be dead with the youths, and that, if they are:

"There is a question to be asked,  
There is an answer to be given."

Of all the strange and terrible months which men have lived through, the last months of this

## PREFACE

war must have been the strangest and most terrible. Mr. Roberts does not describe them, no one could do that, but, like the watchers of the fight at Syracuse, he makes exclamations, from which one may judge of the conflict. There is no better indication of London during the war than his poem *Charing Cross*, after that old railway station, from which so many of the splendid started, and to which so many of the maimed returned. People who read the poem, years hence, will realize from it, how the war seemed to us, when a thousand, or two thousand, or twenty thousand wounded men passed into London in a night, as Mr. Roberts describes, in a "slow processional of pain," as "human refuse left by extravagant war."

In other poems, Mr. Roberts shows us unforgettably some moments of that now dead world of the last year of the war. He has poems on his friends: "Death has claimed their swift young lives," and another, bitter and intense, on the same theme,

"What will they care ten years hence for your  
name,

Who cares a damn who died at Salamis?"

## PREFACE

and another, equally forceful, on some politicians.

But the war ended before the absinthe of the politician could complete the ruin which the brandy of the soldier began. Mr. Roberts is now ready with a matured art to write of the better world which the heart of man will surely try to make out of the wreck of the old. He is young enough to be stirred by the making of that world. He has a quick eye for characters, a lively sense of rhythm, and a fondness for people, which should make his future work as remarkable as his present promise.

JOHN MASEFIELD.

BOAR'S HILL,  
OXFORD.

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## POEMS



## SPRINGTIME IN COOKHAM DEAN

**H**OW marvellous and fair a thing  
It is to see an English spring,  
He cannot know who has not seen  
The cherry trees at Cookham Dean,  
Who has not seen the blossom lie  
Like snowdrifts 'gainst a cloudless sky  
And found the beauty of the way  
Through woodlands odorous with may;  
It is a rare, a holy sight  
To see the hills with blossom white,  
To feel the air about one flowing  
With the silent rapture growing  
In the hidden heart of things  
That yearn, that flower, put forth wings  
And show their splendours one by one  
Beneath the all-rejoicing sun.

Perhaps the joy of all the earth  
Moved through us on that day of mirth  
When in the morning air we trod  
Hills sacred to the woodland god,

## SPRINGTIME IN COOKHAM DEAN

And heard behind us as we ran  
The laughter of a hidden Pan,  
Who dropped his flute because he heard  
The artless cadence of a bird;  
And we, who love the southern sky,  
One moment ceased to wonder why  
A poet in his exile cried  
To see an English spring, and sighed  
Because a chaffinch from the bough  
Sings and shakes the blossom now.  
For who would sigh for southern skies  
Who once had seen the paradise  
Of this new Eden where the flowers  
Drench the woods with odorous showers,  
And give delight till the sense sickens  
With the rapture that it quickens?  
This heaven where petals fall as stars,  
This paradise where beauty bars  
Its petalled, white, inviolable portals  
'Gainst the clamouring of mortals,  
And from green altars in dim shrines  
Calls to the driven soul that pines  
For leafy solitude, and prayer  
That whispers through the branches there.

## SPRINGTIME IN COOKHAM DEAN

When Spring, in her ascension, fills  
The chalice of the sacred hills  
With blossoms like the driven snow,  
And longing takes the heart, then go  
On pilgrimage to Cookham Dean  
And through dim aisles of shadowed green,  
Diapered with the light that trembles  
Round each tree till it resembles  
A maiden letting fall her hair,  
In cataracts of gold — draw near  
The secret that brings Englishmen,  
Faithful through exile, home again,  
And watch the wonder of the morn  
And hear the lark with wings upborne  
Into the cloudless empyrean  
Pour his lucent, quenchless pean,  
Or feel the quickened senses start  
In rapture at the artless art  
Of orchards all in blossom showing  
Against the blue of heaven glowing  
Through its depths of luminous light;  
Then from the windy woodland height  
Through dim ravines where tall trees wait  
For day's decline to gild their state



## SPRINGTIME IN COOKHAM DEAN

And thrill them with caressing fingers  
Of the sun-god whose touch lingers  
Upon their limbs — by paths that wind  
Into the valley go,— and find  
The village by the water's edge  
And listen to the rustling sedge  
That by the churchyard whispers; go —  
And tread the woodland paths I know  
For whosoever has not seen  
The cherry trees at Cookham Dean,  
Who has not roamed its hills and found  
Delight in that enchanted ground,  
He cannot know, he cannot tell  
Where Spring performs her miracle.

## WINTER AND SPRING

**I** COULD not know how dear you are  
Till you were gone,  
Or that the days would seem so far,  
Or one by one  
The hours would pass so slow until  
You came again  
To feed my hungry gaze, and still  
The heart in pain.

I did not know that I could find  
One soul so dear,  
Or that my arms could e'er enfold  
Such love and fear,  
A love that gives itself entire,  
Receiving more,  
A fear that sets my heart afire  
With Love's strange lore.

How could I know your eyes would find  
The soul in me,  
With misery,

## WINTER AND SPRING

Too long embittered, lone and blind  
I had not thought that lips could kiss  
    All pain away,  
And wretchedness be changed to bliss,  
    And Night to Day.

O more than human love that speaks,  
    Discarding words,  
Yet holds such meaning as one seeks  
    And finds in birds'  
First songs of Spring while boughs are bare,  
    I feel anew  
My heart burst forth with blossoms rare,  
    Because of you.

## LOVE THAT WAITED

**I** LOVED you when, a boy,  
I thought you half divine,  
And dreamed of coming joy  
When you were mine:  
I loved you for the grace  
Crowning you when you moved,—  
Your laughter, lips and face,  
All these I loved.

And when a youth, I longed  
To know you were mine own,  
To voice the love that thronged  
My heart, now grown  
With love matured thro' days  
All filled with thoughts of you;  
So love, I sought your face,  
Nor dreamt, nor knew.

The throstle called his mate,  
And in the vales of Spring

## LOVE THAT WAITED

Life ran with joy elate  
Thro' everything;  
" Now will I go to her  
With gentle words and sweet,  
Love's joyous messenger,  
My Queen to greet ! "

But when I found my love,  
Her lips were cold as snow,  
She did not speak or move,  
She could not know :  
Silent she lay in rest,  
The cross within her hands,  
Two lilies on her breast;  
None understands  
Why, in the night, I rise  
Seeking the silent place  
Where in the dark she lies,  
Hiding her face.



## REMEMBRANCE

**C**ALLING of birds in the leafy elms, twilight  
    creeping o'er river and lea,  
Fierce and full on the low horizon swims the sun  
    in a crimson sea;  
The soft wind whispers, the lilac blossom sways in  
    a scented dream of blue,  
And the woodland slumbers, the shadows gather,  
    but I am restless and think of you.

Where are you now, does your heart remember?  
    here, where you left me, I cannot forget —  
Though Winter has vanished and Spring runs riot,  
    that one wild hour is with me yet!  
The leaves had fallen, the night was chilly, the  
    wind shrieked past us in search of prey,  
Driving the withered blossoms of Summer, mock-  
    ing the garlands that decked her way;  
But dearer than hours of golden leisure, softer  
    than days of a flower-sweet June,  
Sweeter than strains of a distant music, fairer far  
    than a woodland moon

## REMEMBRANCE

Ghostly and pale 'mid the gaunt, black branches,  
that one wild hour I hold through Time,  
When vows were uttered and silence followed,—  
naught save the beat of your heart on mine,—  
For years we may heed not, a moment immortal  
may rule all our dreams and the days to be,  
And the Past may die not but live forever, yet  
Life hold naught save a memory.

Chiming of bells in the old church tower, crying of  
fowl on the liliated lake,  
The lawns are bright with the last low glimmer,  
the loud rooks wheel on the homeward wake;  
The old hall windows flash golden sunwards, the  
smoke curls up in the windless air,  
Terrace and arbour and walk are voiceless, do  
they remember who wandered there?  
The low sweet laughter, the rustle of garments,  
the echoing footsteps on gravel and stone —  
They know, they know, and for old sounds listen,  
mutely sad as I pace alone;  
Steps where you trod and paths where you wan-  
dered, all are dear to me, speaking of you —

## REMEMBRANCE

Even if one should cease to remember, these things  
would forget not and still be true;  
New voices will fall where your voice has fallen,  
new feet will tread in the paths that were  
ours,  
Our ears will hear not the birds at even, our eyes  
will see not the blossoms and flowers;  
But one hour shall be sacred from Time the De-  
spoiler, the sunset hour when shadows fall,—  
Then shall old sorrows seem good to remember,  
old footsteps echo, old voices call.

## THE ENCHANTED WOOD

**T**HERE is a wood, I know it well —  
Where broods a hidden mystery,  
I sometimes think the birds could tell  
Its strange and awesome history.

The trees so thickly grow therein  
That all in darkest silence broods,—  
It seems a place of gloom wherein  
Deep passions war with evil moods.

Oh, once I saw, when passing by,  
Upon a moonlit night in June,  
An Altar with a Cross on high  
That gleamed beneath the waning Moon;

And in the spectral glow, the trees  
Became as living things that sang  
A thousand Benedicites,  
Until the hills with echoes rang!

I stood amazed, in breathless awe,  
The Altar glowed with sacred Light!

## THE ENCHANTED WOOD

I cannot tell the things I saw  
Within the wood that wondrous night;

For when it seemed my senses cleared,  
The vision in the wood was gone,  
I only know that something weird,  
Beyond all power of speech, was done.

The universal voice of Earth  
Rose in one agonising groan,  
And all the trees of stoutest girth  
Bowed down unto the Altar stone —

Then from the holy Mystery  
The Moon withdrew behind a cloud,  
And there was nothing more to see,—  
A mist, o'er all, lay like a shroud.

## PHYLLISTRATON

An Arcadian Idyll

(To William Kiddier)

*O*LD deeds, old customs sound the sweeter still  
Though newer, and oft greater, events will  
O'ershadow them and by their newer ring  
Make old tales die. We lose upon Time's wing  
All interest with those past days now flown —  
Hidden with age's dust and half unknown:  
But oft the world when seeking new delight  
Will on some remnant of the past alight,  
Some legend or folk-lore in whispers told  
Around the farmhouse fire in Winter's cold,  
When leaping flames make shadows jump and  
    dance  
And from each nook and corner goblins glance.  
Many a time and oft the tale relates  
How some great hero, girded by the Fates,  
Has conquered city, town, or ventured far  
In hidden realms and honour won in war.  
Such are the fables; freely fancy weaves



## PHYLLISTRATON

*And age adds romance to the hoary leaves.  
Why should we lose these dim and charming tales  
Of peoples living in the misty vales  
Where happy maidens sing the whole day long  
And vie with nightingales in raptured song?*

The night still held the woods in heavy sleep,  
And through the waving branches oft would peep  
Some star that waited for the coming day  
To show its rosy edge along the bay,  
To tip the restless waves with silver light  
And banish from the world the gloom of night.  
The groves of Arcady had not yet heard  
The matin song of joy from soaring bird,  
And silence reigned, save where the streamlet fell  
To lower earth and wound across the dell.  
Then slowly through the trees there softly came  
A rosy light and bathed the leaves in flame,  
The rank mists fled before the warming light,  
The birds awoke and took their early flight.  
The streamlet in the dell now sang aloud,  
The singing lark had mounted till a cloud  
Hid him from human eye, but still his song  
Fluttered to earth and echoed all along

## PHYLLISTRATON

The wooded paths and more secluded groves  
Where lived in shy retreat the cooing doves.  
Then o'er the distant plain the sound of song  
Was carried by the breeze, and all among  
The fernbanks and the rose woods, trooping, came  
Garlanded children, laughing in their game;  
And o'er their lithe young limbs in clusters hung  
Roses and violets, profusely strung  
On winding vines. Their only garment fell  
From shoulder to the knee, displaying well  
The clear cut features and the rosy cheek,  
And moulded limbs; in vain the eye might seek  
For ages and no fairer vision find:  
Not even fleeting bird or panting hind  
A fairer picture makes than childish forms  
Unmarred by evil things, or life's rough storms  
That line the face and dim the lustrous eye  
And make once happy folk entreat to die.  
The cares of life had placed no mark on these  
Blithe spirits, for they danced beneath the trees  
With Youth's light joy, abandoning the thought  
With what for them the morrow might be fraught.  
Still trooping came the joyous, happy throng,  
Hailing the morn with laughter and with song,

## PHYLLISTRATON

Until the echoes rang throughout the dell  
And rolled along to where the water fell  
In sparkling cascades to a darkened pond  
Whose chill green depths revealed the floating  
frond.

The morning haze hung o'er its surface still,  
And tragedy seemed in its waters chill:  
Whither this water flowed no one had found:  
Perhaps it ran to caverns underground,  
Whose slimy roofs ne'er saw the sun's bright ray,  
And surging 'neath the world, found light of day  
Far, far from where it dipped to deepest gloom;  
Thence to a sunlit shore where surges boom  
Upon the parchèd sand, and palm trees toss  
Their plummy tops when cool winds blow across  
The lonely land. Sweetly the children sang  
Their morning anthem and the echoes rang  
Throughout the leafy woods. Far off was heard  
Another music, solemn and more weird,  
Not from the piping voice of Youth, but song  
More richly blended, seeming full and strong  
With life: and lo, where part the woods to show  
A patch of sky, bright with the sun's warm glow,  
There came in view dim figures: as they strode

## PHYLLISTRATON

Oft would they turn to one who stately rode  
Upon a throne high placèd in a car,  
Pulled by a troop of maidens casting far  
Roses and other blooms. The sombre woods  
Grew bright with splendrous robes and wondrous  
goods  
Sparkling with gems.

The car and round about  
Was thronged with folk who made a joyous  
shout —

“ Phyllistraton, the King of Calydon!  
Hail noble King! Apollo's bravest son! ”  
He, turning, smiled upon the cheering mass  
And spake. “ Good people, let my carriage pass,  
For see, yon shining temple to great Pan  
Urges me onwards, for is there a man  
Would tarry when the dream of his delight  
In bridal garb awaits him? Wondrous bright  
Are her blue eyes, so blue that not the sea,  
Nor even the wide expanse over thee,  
Can show a blue so lustrous and so pure!  
For many maidens fair would I endure  
Hardships and trials, but for her alone  
Would I sell liberty. She would atone

## PHYLLISTRATON

For basest servitude, and chains of gold  
Should bind me fast!

The gods once made me bold,  
And venturing in Arcady, I gazed  
And stood transfixed by beauty — so amazed  
That doubts o'ercame me, and I asked again  
If 'twas Olympian or Arcadian plain,—  
Not where the gods dwell, but where shepherds  
free

Pipe to great Pan beneath the laurel tree.  
'Twas then her young attendant I espied,  
And running towards her in hot haste, I cried —  
'What fair shade haunts thy dell, hath she a  
name?

Such beauty surely won undying fame!'  
And in low tones the maid replied, 'Sir, she  
Is Chryseïa, the daughter of Acte,  
Of charm so great that Artemis hath made  
Her keeper of the dell and forest glade.'  
'Twas thus I came to know this charming child,  
For child she was, and is; — of manner mild  
And meek: such is her gentle sympathy,  
To her, the timid kid for company  
Will come, and all the world to her is kind.

## PHYLLISTRATON

Haste then, my willing escort, leave behind  
All thought of sorrow, joy with me this day,  
And speed two happy lovers on their way! ”

The temple to great Pan was wondrous bright  
With fluted pillars, carved in marble white;  
Its hundred steps were thronged, and where the  
pool

In its great, massive basin caught the cool  
Bright jet of water springing from a fount  
That drew its silv'ry spray from distant mount,  
The maids of Chryseïa sat nervously.  
Oft one would rise and very tenderly  
Impress a kiss upon her mistress' cheek,  
And Chryseïa, bewildered, turned to seek  
With eager eyes of love, the distant sward  
Whence slowly came her future liege and lord  
Amidst the sound of cymbals and of song.  
At last the rose-filled car was brought along,  
And scarce had halted when from out it ran  
The lovesick boy. The temple to great Pan  
Trembled beneath the mighty roar which swelled  
Up to the heavens when the folk beheld  
Their Chryseïa run to the outstretched arms



## PHYLLISTRATON

Of him who offered her a lover's charms:  
And as he drew her to his manly breast  
Kiss after kiss upon her brow he pressed,  
While she lay gathered in his arms half faint  
With boundless joy, and love without restraint.

While thus they stood, mounting the steps there  
came

A tall white-bearded figure, halting, lame,  
But from all sides great reverence was shown  
To this newcomer, for his name was known  
Far off across the plains of Arcady,  
From high Olympus to Leonidi.  
So mighty were his works that when he spake  
The wind was silenced.

From far off men take  
Their harvest offerings to him and he,  
The Priest of Pan, with all solemnity  
Would offer to the god, with chant and song,  
Their thanks for winters short and summers long.  
This happy morn the Priest had other task —  
To pour the wedding oil from out his flask  
And ask a blessing of those august powers  
That bless with bliss and give to wedded hours

## PHYLLISTRATON

Another joy than love — the eyes of Youth,  
That see not fading beauty; want of truth  
In such perception then is virtuous.

Slowly the Priest advanced and spake,

“ To us,

O children of the Plains of Arcady,  
O shepherds of the glade and grassy lea,  
Is given cause for joy. This is the day  
When we are merry as we sing our lay  
To our god Pan. The woods this morn shall  
ring,

For see what rosy garlands children bring  
To deck the Altar — such a scene should see  
Our Chryseïa, fair daughter of Acte,  
Given to one, though young, yet old in song  
And deeds that make men valiant, true and strong.  
Phyllistraton, thou King of Calydon,  
O stranger of strange race, yet there is none  
More fit to take unto a loving breast  
Our maiden pure. But heed! before are pressed  
In wedded joy her shapely lips to thine,  
Thou must fulfil the oracle divine  
Which runneth in the legend of our land,

## PHYLLISTRATON

And list ye well that ye may understand,—  
‘ He who shall claim the daughter of Acte  
Shall play upon the flute a melody  
Upon the morning of the feast to Pan,  
And such his playing that there be not man  
Who can outvie him.’

So if there is one,  
Let him proclaim it here. If there is none  
To challenge him, then shall the victor claim  
His prize — the maiden Chryseïa, and fame  
Shall rest upon his brow. Ye people hear,  
For I shall ask no more. Is he to wear  
The victor’s laurel? Heed, it is your choice  
To challenge or to crown him with your voice! ”

Quickly in answer rose a mighty shout  
That swelled and spread o’er dale and round  
about,  
Proclaiming with a universal voice  
Phyllistraton was the free people’s choice,  
And as the master of the flute that morn  
His was the prize. But scarce the cry was borne  
Throughout the grove, scarce had the echoes died,  
When, to their cry, a deep loud voice replied —

## PHYLLISTRATON

*"I claim the prize as master of the flute!"*

The whole throng turned about, surprised and  
mute

To see who spake so boldly. When they gazed  
Upon the challenger they were amazed;

So poor, he has a skin about his loins!

The Priest himself with all the people joins

The laughter which uprises to the sky

At thought that such a man should dare to try

To gain the prize! Yet pleasing was his face,

And thus unclad, his figure had a grace

That kings might envy, and his wavy hair

In curls hung o'er his brow; his chest was bare,

His neck, browned with the sun, and by his side

A scrip hung down, from which, with conscious  
pride,

He drew his flute. Then spake he to them all

In simple words, from 'neath the Altar's pall —

"O people of the Plains of Arcady,

Ye marvel that a shepherd like to me

Should be so bold and claim the beauteous prize!

Knew I not Love before, those bright blue eyes

Would teach me now, and such a form divine

Would make me yearn until I called her mine.

## PHYLLISTRATON

'Tis not on kings alone that Love can throw  
Its spell, but on us all, nor can love know,  
If it is love of Love, and not of Gain,  
The claim of rank or riches. No, in vain  
They oft would buy — a jewel hath its price,  
But Love hath none save willing sacrifice  
Of all that we once loved to one we love :  
That is the only test by which to prove  
If love is love of that which Love shall bring  
In rich possessions, such as hath a king,  
Or if it is a love where poverty  
Shall ever grip, but where can never be  
Regret, such love enriches all with all  
That life can ever give. Hence do I call  
And take the challenge up. Now hark ye well,  
For I will play, and after, ye shall tell  
If there be one among you who can play  
A sweeter lay than mine."

Thus did he say  
Unto the people gathered. While they talked  
Among themselves of his strange words, he  
walked

To where the Priest sat. When he held his flute  
Up to his lips, the whispers died, and mute

## PHYLLISTRATON

All waited, breathless, for the first few notes.  
Then on the air there waveringly floats  
The sound of song, so low and yet so sweet,  
More like unto the first light sounds which greet  
The starry night when first the nightingale  
Sends forth his plaintive carol o'er the vale,  
And mounting, ever higher, richer, grows  
Until the hearer dreams the song which throws  
Its flood of melody is not of earth  
But from some realm of joy and tuneful mirth.  
Those first light notes turned back their thoughts  
again

To that romantic age when strong rough men  
First wandered in the groves of Arcady  
Enchanted with a dreamy melody  
That led them on until they found at last  
Pastoral plains, where wild deer flitted past,  
Alarmed at these intruders of their peace:  
The strangers gazed, then music seemed to cease,  
And darkness crept across the open lea;  
The wind among the trees moaned as the sea  
And fearfully around the whisper ran  
"We are enchanted —'tis the pipes of Pan  
Hath led us to his groves in Arcady"



## PHYLLISTRATON

And settling there they lived quite happily —  
Such was the legend which those notes recalled,  
And many, fearing, listened, much appalled.  
Those floating notes seemed not of mortal birth  
But higher origin of nobler worth.  
Still higher and yet higher, mounting still,  
The soaring notes outpoured across the rill  
And echoed back across the plain again.  
The children harked, enraptured, and the men  
In silence stood, half wond'ring, half afraid.  
The King of Calydon still held the maid,  
And loth to part, he shot defiant looks  
At him who played. The kingly mind ill brooks  
Obstruction to its plans, and had he dared  
He would have fought — and yet — and yet he  
feared  
That simple shepherd — all his valour fled,  
And though no coward, there within him said,  
In warning tones, a voice, "*No mortal this  
Sweet player of the flute, Olympus' bliss  
Hath taught such song to flow!*" Those notes  
still soared  
Until it seemed as if the heavens poured  
The golden song that flooded all the sky;

[27]



## PHYLLISTRATON

A song, not from the earth, but from the high  
Broad realms above. Could mortal breath in-  
spire

A song that breathed of this divinest fire?  
Those last pure sounds of earth could never be,  
But a strayed chord from Heaven's symphony.

Scarce had the player ceased when quickly ran  
A whisper all around, " 'Tis Pan! 'Tis Pan!  
The Pipes of Pan! Great Pan hath come  
again! "

In haste the stranger quelled the cry, " I fain  
Would be a God, yet wherefore call me Pan —  
The wish is not the deed, would any man  
A mortal be if wish could make him God?  
Nor have I yet on high Olympus trod,  
I am not Pan, but taught by Pan to play  
The flute he gave me when, one summer's day,  
I sat and slept beside the running stream,  
Dreaming that Pan had come; yet 'twas a dream  
Most real, and when I woke, within my hand  
I found a flute, and now throughout the land  
I wend my way and pipe to who will hear.  
And now, once more, I claim the maiden dear

## PHYLLISTRATON

From her young lover. Maiden! come! O  
come

And let me lead you to my forest home,  
Deep in the thickest woods where roses grow  
Around the stunted boles, where streamlets show  
Their silv'ry faces winding thro' the glade,  
To sunlight leaping from the forest's shade,  
With spray, like flashing jewels, falling where  
The rushing stream whirls o'er the roaring weir;  
The morn awakes to song of soaring lark,  
And rays of sunshine in the forest dark  
Disperse the morning mists. The slumberous day  
Is fragrant with the scent of new mown hay,  
And evening's calm cool hours sweeter seem  
Than all the fevered day. A golden gleam,  
Reflected from the glory of the sky,  
Where glowing colours blaze and quickly die,  
Touches the leaves with fire. A breeze is sent  
And whispers through the woods a sad lament  
Like a sweet vesper hymn melodious,  
Which lulls the woods to deeper sleep. To us  
All things that can delight shall make our  
days  
One happy dream amidst life's sunlit ways.

## PHYLLISTRATON

O Priest of Pan! Ye people of the plains!  
Award to me this maiden for my pains."

As thus he spake, Phyllistraton then took  
The maiden by the hands. "I will not brook  
The one who loves me, and is loved by me,  
To share the humble lot of such as he!  
Love hath a greater tie than that of song;  
If Pan himself should pipe the whole day long  
My Chryseïa would still be mine, for Love  
Ignores the powers of Earth or Heaven above!  
No! Chryseïa, dear Chryseïa shall reign  
As Queen of Calydon o'er my domain,  
A queen of Beauty should be queen of Earth,  
A simple shepherd knows not beauty's worth.  
No idle legend breaks our plighted troth  
E'en if it doth invoke Olympus' wrath!"

And as he boldly spake these words he turned  
To all the people gathered.

"I have earned  
True love with love, and not with magic song.  
Then answer all ye people — Shall the wrong,

## PHYLLISTRATON

False legend take away my joy in life  
And rob me of a queen and of a wife? ”

The question rang throughout the woods and died,  
But neither murmur nor a sound replied.  
A sullen silence held them as a spell;  
Love or a legend, which? — but none could tell.  
Then as they stood, arose a mighty roar,  
A rushing wind swept all the leaves before,  
The heavens rent, and vivid flashes lit  
The darkened scene. The temple dome was hit  
And bathed in vivid flames by lightning flash.  
The very earth shook 'neath the thund'rous crash,  
Yet o'er it all was heard the wind's wild cry,  
As though a host of demons thro' the sky  
Were flying, wailing, from their dreadful doom!  
But louder still than all the thund'rous boom  
Of crashing trees, as tho' in terror's throes,  
An awful shriek from him who piped arose —  
“ I hear! I hear! ” he cried, with arms outflung,  
Beneath a stricken tree whose branches hung  
In woeful state; and as he spake there ceased  
The moaning cry, as though a spirit wrest  
Itself away from earth, and there he stood

## PHYLLISTRATON

In terror near the border of the wood.

“Ye people of the Plains of Arcady!

That was the Naiad's cry! Ah woe is me!

That moaning voice proclaims my end is nigh!

Alas! for me to love is but to die!

Maid of my heart, sweet child who taught me  
love,

Faint not nor fear, thy lover need not prove

His angry words. The dawn is soon the night

Of my young love; the blossom, soon a blight

Hath dashed its pride, yet, though it meaneth  
death,

I find a joy in each fast fleeting breath

That hurries me from life. Sweet maid, but hear

My fate forlorn, and should a tender tear

In pity fall for me, then do I go

Unto my fate, happy in that I know

One heart that mourns for me, and such a heart,

That for it our short breath would often part

And leave its narrow prison for the great

Broad unknown realms above. Hark, I relate

The story of my hapless wanderings: —

One dewy eve I sat expanding rings

Upon a pool, which grew until they died

## PHYLLISTRATON

In calm and nothingness. When I espied  
This strange unrestfulness, wherefore it showed,  
Full eager was I then, for sunsets glowed  
All mirrored in perfection other eyes  
Upon its glassy face. The trunks and leaves  
That fringed the water's edge, reflected grew  
Within its depths, fantastic and anew.  
Charmed was I with this spot, and so I played  
Upon my flute. Softly the evening's shade  
Its filmy mantle threw across the glen,  
But I played on in happiness — and then,  
Ah, then! Could words relate the sight that rose  
From out those dull green depths — the sweet  
    repose,  
The dazzling beauty of that perfect face,  
The flowing hair, still wet and with a trace  
Of that phosphorous fire which dwells below!  
Thus rose the Naiad, solemn, stately, slow,  
Venus herself could not more handsome be  
When reigning o'er her court. Then unto me  
The Naiad spake.

    ' O shepherd piper, thou  
Hast made the queen of Naiads break a vow  
That she would never rise up from beneath



## PHYLLISTRATON

These waters which the water lilies sheath.  
But such a song would make a vow a sin  
If it were kept. Fair youth, I shelter in  
These gloomy depths in refuge from the wrath  
Of Venus who in jealous hatred hath  
Pursued me in her fury. Here I dwell  
Amidst the damp rank weeds. Could maiden tell  
A sadder story? Pipe once more to me,  
For it recalls the past — tho' memory  
Doth pain: yet pipe, for ever pain's a joy  
When I but see again that shepherd boy,  
One such as thou, who played his happy song  
And vowed his love to me the whole day long.'  
'Twas thus she spake, her tones were sweet and  
low

Like zephyr winds on summer days that flow  
In melody afar. I loudly cried —  
'One loves you yet!' but sadly she replied,  
'No, never now, my fate is thus to be  
And sadly pine away: 'tis not for me  
To know the joy of Love!' Again I cried,  
'O water nymph, happy that I espied  
Your beauteous form, for know, one loves you yet,  
These eyes, this heart of mine, can ne'er forget



## PHYLLISTRATON

What they have seen and loved!'

"The Naiad turned

And spake to me, 'Oh, often have I yearned  
To hear such words of love — and wilt thou vow  
To love but me alone?' She spake so low  
And dreamily, bewitched with beauty, I,  
In fervent accents quickly made reply —  
'O Naiad fair, may all the gods above  
Avenge with death if ever I should love  
And vow in words to others save to you!'  
And as I vowed, she sank beneath from view.  
Thus did I swear my love, tho' now I know  
It was bewitching charm that made me vow,  
And often have I wondered if I dreamed  
All that I thought I saw. The waters gleamed  
And rippled, but in vain I waited there,  
For ne'er returned again that Naiad fair.  
Since then for many seasons have I played  
My flute throughout the land, and never stayed  
In peace. Where'er I roamed, my vow of love  
Made me afraid, lest that the gods above  
Should vengeance take if ever I made speech  
To maiden fair. In vain would I beseech  
Those waters cold to show the form again

## PHYLLISTRATON

Of her I loved. But true love makes us fain  
Forget the ties of old for new desire.  
Dear maiden, though 'tis death, I still aspire  
To call thee mine. Alas, for me the breath  
Which tells my love announces also death,  
But love cares not for death, and though my heart  
With sorrow breaks, still rather would I part  
With life itself than not declare my love!  
I have declared it, and the gods above  
Now take their vengeance! Maiden dear, fare-  
well,  
I, dying, leave thee. Far off in a dell  
My eyes will close in sleep for evermore,  
And they shall ope upon a brighter shore  
Where I await thy coming."

Thus he said,  
And as he spake he looked as though one dead;  
The rosy cheeks were blanched: a pallid hue  
Spread o'er his face, and on his lithe form grew  
The weight of years, enfeebling all his frame;  
Then towards the temple steps, he, halting, came,  
And taking both the maiden's hands in his,  
He lowly bent and gave to each a kiss.  
The people stood in silent awe to see

## PHYLLISTRATON

This climax of a lover's tragedy;  
Phyllistraton's blue eyes were dimmed with mist  
When that enfeebled, dying player kissed  
The hands he loved. "Farewell! I go to die,  
To die for love! Farewell!"

That last low cry  
Rang o'er the dell and thro' the quivering air,  
Filled with a sad lament and deep despair.  
Then through their midst he passed across the  
glade

And disappeared within the forest's shade.  
In silence stood they all, and not a sound  
Was heard within the dell. A hush profound  
Had fall'n upon the earth, till came a breeze  
And made a tearful sigh among the trees,  
But over all they heard the Naiad's cry  
Float in the air, and then, echoing, die  
With one deep sob among the distant hills,  
Shaking the mountain tops and glistening rills.  
And lastly, heard they from the forest deep  
The roaring of a wind, which seemed to weep,  
And wither by its touch the falling leaves,  
In fancy, moaning loud — "Thus, Nature  
grieves!"

## MOONLIGHT SONATA

WHEN I walked out from Grasmere Vale,  
One hour after eventide,  
The Moon had risen weirdly pale,  
And the wind blew far and wide  
The withered leaves, all brown and sere,  
That told me of the mellowing year.

Then, suddenly, I saw a sight  
That made me pause upon my way —  
A flickering maze of dancing light  
That shone like silver spray!  
I stood entranced, forgetting all,  
And powerless in the vision's thrall.

It was a simple thing, I know,  
A few dead leaves stirred by the breeze  
That danced and made a spectral glow  
Beneath the barren trees;  
It seemed as though they yet had life  
To mock the wind in joyous strife!

## MOONLIGHT SONATA

Beneath the Moon they shone so bright,  
And flickered with such ghostliness;  
Embodied spirits of the night,

    Beneath the Moon's caress  
They tossed and twirled, and round and round  
They blithely capered o'er the ground!

When, suddenly, they all did cease  
Their dancing in the moonlit way;  
The breeze died down, and all was peace,

    And so I did not stay —  
The wind, it was their very breath,  
And gone, they all lay still in death!

## TO A LADY

LADY, how can the least, imperfect art,  
However used with skill, suffice to prove  
Or give expression to the tender love  
Grown 'neath the radiance thy dear smiles impart?  
I am held captive by thy gentle heart  
And daily made thy debtor, and above  
All beauteous things, imperial, thou dost move  
In queenly office held by queenly art;

Therefore I am most happy when thy thought  
Towards me is turned, and like an Eastern slave  
Whose silent homage won a Queen for friend,  
I live and serve within thy gracious Court,  
Finding the slightest sign of love I gave  
Repaid with graces which no Arts transcend.

## JOY

WHO named thee Joy — what Delphic  
whisper told

Thy mission to the hearts of men, what muse  
Divined the treasure of thy heart's pure gold?  
Wert thou so named that poets might enthuse  
And in the whispering might find sweet excuse  
For drinking nectar which thy lips enfold?  
For those who know thee, Joy, forget the cold  
Relentless world, paying young Love his dues.

Joy in the days of Spring came down to me,  
Love in her heart, and laughter in her eyes,  
And in her speech a dulcet melody  
Wherein two hearts commingled, with soft sighs  
Trembling between the pauses, when the lips,  
Voiceless with passion, sought the soul's eclipse.



## MEMORIES

(To Mrs. Naylor)

**D**O you remember  
Claude, Lancelot and I  
Lying in wonder,  
Beneath a May sky,  
Listening in silence 'mid green Malvern hills  
To the song of the lark and its wonderful trills?

Do you remember —  
You cannot forget!  
Listening in wonder  
I see your face yet;  
List'ning, I whispered, " Ah, if we could sing  
As yon lark in the sky! How his melodies ring! "

" Chorister, singing  
High up in blue heaven,  
Oh that a part of  
Thy rapture were given,

## MEMORIES

Poet that soarest, to one who would soar,  
One who lives for his song, for his song and no  
more! "

Do you remember  
Those words which I spake,  
Lying with you  
And with yours in the brake?  
Clouds floated over us, what did we care  
For the lark was our minstrel, our wine was the  
air!

Ceaselessly toiling  
With quivering wings,  
Higher he reaches  
And blither he sings,  
With a pæan of song from a heart overjoyed  
He is gone from our sight, 'tis a voice from the  
void!

Do you remember  
Down, down from the blue  
Dropping, he came then,  
'Tis certain you do!

## MEMORIES

“ Look how he dives ! ” I remember you said,  
Then he dived, and the hills were as dumb as the  
dead.

Do you remember —  
Oh ! can you forget —  
Moments so golden  
Come back to me yet,  
Lancelot and Dorothy, Claude, you and I —  
All listening to one little bird in the sky !

## STRAYED HYLAS

*σὺν καὶ οἱ Ἕγλας κίεν, ἐσθλὸς ὁπάων,  
πρωθήβης, ἰὼν τε φορεὺς φυλακὸς τε βιοῖο.  
ΑΡΓΟΝΑΤΤΙΚΩΝ.*

**H**YLAS, the beautiful Hylas, ere Manhood  
had broadened his frame,  
Was comely in sight of all maidens, and Heracles,  
passing one day,  
Seeing him playing all naked, called out to him:  
“Tell me thy name!”  
And the youth answered thus: “I am Hylas,  
what wouldst thou, O Stranger, O say!”  
And Heracles, worshipping Beauty, was charmed  
with the handsome young Greek,  
For dark were his eyes, and his body glistened  
brightly with wrestler’s oil,  
And his was the grace of Apollo. “O lustrous-  
limbed athlete, I seek  
A pupil to learn of my cunning, which knowledge  
shall bring him much spoil.  
Tomorrow, when breaks o’er the ocean the light  
of the Dawn, I depart

## STRAYED HYLAS

With Jason, whose vessel awaits me, to join in the  
Quest of the Fleece;  
Come, follow! thy limbs they are lithesome, the  
voyage will need a brave heart,  
But Heracles, he will o'erguard thee, no stronger  
than he in all Greece."

Then quick the reply of young Hylas: "O  
master, I follow thee now!  
My limbs they are stout, for this noonday I  
wrestled with Crassus the Strong,  
And conquered the Pride of Iolchus; this laurel  
they placed on my brow,  
Not unworthy a pupil thou'lt find me. Accept  
me, O master, I long  
For venture where danger o'erthreatens, for sight  
of the Land of the West,  
And the breath of the soft-heaving ocean! Blow,  
winds! for we sail in the Morn!  
Swift Argo goes out from the harbour, goes forth  
to the Isles of the Blessed,  
And Jason, with Heracles, leads us! Aurora!  
Come, Goddess of Dawn!"

## STRAYED HYLAS

So Hylas sailed forth from Iolchus, and Heracles  
loved the young boy,  
He trained him to feats of endurance, he gave him  
the wealth of his lore,  
And daily young Hylas grew stronger, his beauty  
to all was a joy,  
And, were he a God from Olympus, they could not  
have worshipped him more.  
His laughter was light as the sunshine, his teeth  
were as pearls set between  
Lips like the bow of young Eros, and brighter  
than stars were his eyes,  
His body was sweet as stored apples, and as silk  
was its naked sheen,  
So young Hylas 'mid men was held peerless, by  
maidens a coveted prize.

Day after day sailed the galley, the rhythmical  
beat of the oars  
Kept time with the song of the minstrels who sang  
of the glories of war;  
It fired the sailors to action, till, riding 'twixt  
Hellespont's shores,

## STRAYED HYLAS

They anchored in lee of a mountain that looked  
on the bay from afar.

Like porphyry gleaming in sunset, the cliffs  
towered up to the sky,

And round them were odorous valleys. "Here  
rest we awhile!" cried they all,

And, forth from the galley outleaping, they ran to  
the fields that were nigh,

Where gladly they rested or feasted, or bathed in  
the waterfall.

O beauteous valley, all golden! for here 'mid the  
violets grew

Pale lilies and hyacinths stately, that dreamed in  
the water below,

And sweet was the slumberous noonday, and soft  
were the zephyrs that threw

The scent of the violet meadows, at dusk when the  
West was aglow.

So Hylas was happy and wandered, the fairest of  
all that was fair,

He lay 'mid the blooms amaranthine and sang to  
Apollo an hymn,



## STRAYED HYLAS

Or bathed in bright rivers of crystal, or plaited the  
vine in his hair,  
And danced like the naked Silenus, enacting each  
transient whim.  
One day by a pool he lay dreaming, his couch was  
a hyacinth bed,  
His hand idly dipped in the waters when softly a  
beautiful face,  
Out of the depths slowly rising, perceiving the  
boy's curly head,  
Uttered a cry of amazement, and loved the young  
Greek for his grace.  
Then quickly she called through the waters, and  
Malis and Eunica came  
To Nychea, fair as a lily — together the nymphs  
took his hand,  
Then gently they lifted his body, all fearing to  
shatter a frame  
Moulded with beauty so wondrous, so strong, yet  
so lithe and so grand.  
Oh, how their bosoms beat quickly as to them they  
pressed the fair boy,  
And, dreaming, he clasped Malis to him, then,  
waking, was startled to find

## STRAYED HYLAS

The nymph in his arms gently nestling, her face  
filled with radiant joy,

While Eunica pillowed him softly, her hair float-  
ing o'er from behind.

Then Nychea whispered: "Dear Hylas, we love  
thee, for ever dwell here,

Thy strength and thy beauty delight us, reign King  
of the Nymphs of the Pool!"

But Hylas upstarting cried: "Never! Where  
am I? come, tell me, O where?"

Then the nymph answered: "Why wouldst es-  
cape us? — this grotto is splendrous and  
cool!"

"Hearken then, Naiads, my reason is not that I  
count Love so light,

For this is the realization of shadowy dreams I  
have dreamed

Of bosoms on which I slept pillowed through all  
the dark joy of the night.

No! I hold Love too precious to scorn it; were  
thy promises all that they seemed,

Duty forbids me to linger, the galley that rides in  
the bay

## STRAYED HYLAS

Awaits my return; then release me, or Jason, our  
leader, will frown,  
For the sailors have long left the meadows, we  
sail out at sunset today,  
We sail to the West, out to Phasis, in the path  
where the sun rolls down.  
Beauty! ah, what is my beauty? — a thing that  
must fade with the day,  
These arms now so lusty and lithesome, my body  
now throbbing with life,  
These thighs with their shimmering muscles that  
glide in their sheaths as they play;  
Time-enfeebled, are scattered to ashes, the sport  
of the winds in their strife.

“ Love is a libertine, Naiads, he maketh mine eyes  
so to burn  
Like stars in the vestment of darkness that, madly  
enraptured, ye cry,  
Nor hear how the snarer exultingly laughs at the  
passions that yearn  
All hot for the scent of my body; and thoughtless,  
at bidding, ye fly,

## STRAYED HYLAS

Clasping with passionate sobbings, outpouring  
your love in mine ear,

Till he, who resisted, is helpless, succumbs to your  
fiercest embrace!

O glorious strength that enfolds ye, how noble this  
manhood to wear!

Strength is the pride of my being, Beauty the boast  
of my face! —

But listen, O Naiads, O hearken, 'tis vainly ye  
hold me, for I

Must turn me away to the seashore, the galley  
awaits my return.

O Naiads enchanting, I love ye, but Beauty like  
yours cannot die,

My lustrous-limbed body will perish, not then for  
my love ye would yearn!

Hark! 'Tis a voice that calls 'Hylas!'  
'Hylas!' — 'tis Heracles calls,

He who has nurtured and loved me, Heracles,  
strongest of men!

Nychea! Eunica! Malis! — He wonders what  
fate me befalls!

Release me, be merciful, Naiads! I fain would  
go to him again!

## STRAYED HYLAS

‘Hylas! Ho! Hylas! Where art thou?’

He calls me — nay, words shall not soothe  
My body with dalliance fleshly, no bosom shall  
pillow my head;

If your breasts were as fair as the lilies, if your  
skin were as waxen and smooth,

If your lips were as rose leaves, no kisses, no  
sighs, and no tears that ye shed,

Would make me succumb to your beauty; release  
me! these waters are dank,

I pine for the rays of Apollo, I pant for the breath  
of the day!

Release me, O Nymphs, I implore ye! for when  
through these waters I sank,

Ye promised to lead me back thither, now must I  
return on my way.”

But vainly he pleaded in accents, now angry, now  
tearful, now soft,

The nymphs flung their white arms around him.

“O Hylas, we love thee, here dwell!

Remain with us here for we need thee, for thou  
art the boon that we oft

## STRAYED HYLAS

Petitioned Olympus to grant us; thy beauty hath  
pleased them so well,  
They sent thee, dear Hylas, then wherefore rebellion when Gods make decree?  
Reject not, lest worse should befall thee, the love  
that we offer thee now!  
Thou art fair, thou art beautiful, Hylas,—‘ His  
beauty immortal shall be! ’  
For thus spake the Gods of Olympus, nor falsely  
are known they to vow.”

So softly beguiled with their voices, he gave him  
to lover’s delights,  
And the nymphs of the grotto, as servants, attended his slightest behest,  
But oft in the slumberous noondays, and oft in the  
calm of the nights,  
He bethought him of Heracles wandering, and  
wept when he thought of the Quest.  
And the Slayer of Lions, bemoaning, returned to  
Propontis’ wild shore,  
But never a sign of the galley, all barren the sea  
met the sky,

## STRAYED HYLAS

For Jason had wearied of waiting — “ Return .  
now each man to his oar ! ”

And ploughing the furrows of ocean, they sailed  
where the sunsets die.

Then Heracles turned to the westward — “ The  
boy whom I loved, he is dead ! ”

He cried in the depths of his sorrow, and ranging  
o'er dale and o'er glen,

To Trachis, all footsore and weary, he journeyed  
through valley and mead,

Nor Time sealed the fount of his sorrow, nor  
Springtide rejoiced him again,

For Hylas he loved as a brother, and Hylas he  
loved as a son,

And life that was golden grew cheerless, and  
heavy the heart that was light.

“ The Gods gave him Beauty,” he muttered —  
“ grew jealous of what they had done,

So they struck at their rival so handsome; ah, who  
against Gods can fight ? ”



## ON THE SEVERN

**W**HEN the afternoon was golden  
In a boat we gently crept  
Up the river 'twixt the olden,  
Silent hills that softly slept,  
Till we came to dreaming Arley  
Climbing high beyond the bend —  
Dreaming, sun-red roofs from which slow wreaths  
of smoke ascend.

When the fringe of hills lay burning  
As the Sun sank in the West,  
Down the misty stream returning,  
Softly gliding, oars at rest,  
We sang sweetly in the twilight  
As the purple hills turned grey,  
Floating, floating, floating down the silent home-  
ward way.

O'er the sombre hills ascending  
Rose the Moon whose flooding light

## ON THE SEVERN

Changed the sullen river wending  
To a silver path through night;  
In our wake the rippling water  
Like a bed of diamonds shone,  
Gleaming, gleaming, gleaming as the boat went  
gliding on.

Quaint, old Bewdley town lay dreaming  
Where the silver Severn flows  
With reflections brightly gleaming  
'Neath the lamplit bridge that throws  
Shafts of light upon the water  
Swirling dark and silently,  
Flowing, flowing, flowing past the arches to the  
sea.

In the silence, long, long after,  
When those moments are no more,  
Still I hear the ghostly laughter  
With the sound of dipping oar,  
And my heart goes fondly dreaming,  
Down to Bewdley Bridge it goes —  
Gliding, gliding, gliding where the silver Severn  
flows!

TO A LADY WHO PAINTED MY POR-  
TRAIT

(H. S.)

LADY, your eyes are quick to find  
The subtle shades upon a face,  
And with a touch, both true and kind,  
Your brush has left full many a trace  
Of the half-wonder and surprise  
That filled me as I watched the hand,  
So swift beneath your thoughtful eyes  
That look, and seeing, understand.

For you have painted, not my face,  
But something which, with feeling rare,  
Your heart divined, and in the place  
Of eyes that merely gaze and stare  
You painted light diffused in gloom  
Because you knew a poet sees  
In Beauty, its foreshadowed doom,  
In Life, its hidden mysteries.

## A LADY WHO PAINTED MY PORTRAIT

Therefore, O lady, hand with eye  
And feeling heart combine to give  
That power of subtle alchemy  
By which your subjects truly live;  
And if a poet's soul has been  
Wholly revealed to you, be kind!  
Art, with its deeper sight, has seen  
Something to which the world is blind.

## CLIFTON CHURCH

PEACE! Such a peace serene o'erbroods this  
place

That melancholy Death for once seems fair,  
Even the winds have ceased their boisterous race,  
Once more upgathered to their hidden lair;

Slowly the church clock chimes the hour of eight,  
Its fingers now grown golden in the light  
Of the swift-dropping sun, whose crimson state  
Fades in the grey and purple of the night;

Shrilly afar, the peacock's strident call  
Shatters the silence of this magic hour,  
Proudly he sweeps the lawns of Clifton Hall,  
Thinking his beauty greater than all power;

Yet, foolish bird, even as thou this one,  
Forth in the glory of her bridal veil,  
Passed up the path, fleet flew the years, and gone,  
Hither they brought her, sightless, voiceless, pale.

## CLIFTON CHURCH

Joy she had known and happy was her lot;  
Lips of a sunbrowned youth in summer days,  
When all the air was slumberous and hot,  
Often had shaped them to her beauty's praise.

Here 'neath an elm, he lies who kissed those lips,  
Stilled are the limbs that throbbed in ecstasy;  
Swiftly yon pointing finger onward slips  
Round the scored dial to Eternity.

Turn ye aside and read this stone — " Here lies,  
Age twenty-two, the body —— " — read no  
more!

In the few graven words my heart descries  
How much deep sorrow and despair they store!

Knew ye not him? — He was a youth most fair,  
Graceful as ever Grecian sculptor dreamed:  
List to the roaring of the distant weir,  
Often his body in its waters gleamed:

When o'er the earth the call of Spring was heard,  
When all the valley and the grove were gay,  
Filled with the blossom's scent and song of bird,  
Throbbing with life, he went at break of day,

## CLIFTON CHURCH

And like a god that glories in his might,  
Cleaved he the waters with his strenuous arms,  
Nor do I wonder that each maiden's sight  
Fondly was turned to view his many charms.

He knew the happy hours of youthful days,  
For often, knee-deep, 'mid the ferns he stood,  
Telling his love to one whose winsome ways  
Filled with strange passion youth's hot-singing  
    blood.

Thus thro' the years he grew to man's estate,  
A glorious creature full of strength and health,  
Little he knew how interweaving Fate  
Sought subtle Death to steal away Life's wealth.

One morn, one happy, sunlit summer-morn  
When all the earth her fairest vesture donned,  
They found his ivory body, bruised and torn,  
Down by the lashing weir, whose waters fond

So oft his muscled arms had thrashed to foam,  
And by the floating weeds upborne he lay;  
Oh tender were the hands that bore him home!  
Oh many were the tears they shed that day!



## CLIFTON CHURCH

See, where the church's trellised portal stands,  
Down by the shadow of the buttressed walls,  
Gleams a white angel with upraisèd hands? —  
A tender story that quiet spot recalls:

A little bud, the coronal of Spring,  
From off the parent-tree of Motherhood,  
The tend'rest, sweetest, smiling little thing  
That ever sprang from human flesh and blood!

Not long it blossomed in the cottage home,  
For ere the rose its fragrant petals shed,  
Long ere the swallows sought their southern home,  
The little bud of Life lay still and dead.

Long thro' the summer night they watched beside  
The little cot, and when the birds at dawn  
Twittered their welcome to the day, it died,  
Life that had passed to Death ere scarcely born.

Back to the Heavenly Gardener, here they bore  
The end of all their hopes and all their joy,  
Thus do we unto earth again restore  
The little thing she gives in Life's employ;

## CLIFTON CHURCH

Nor do I think in vain the sighs and tears,  
Life is not measured by its joys alone,  
Else were it vain to live and count the years,  
Else were Life's music one long monotone.

Sorrow and Joy, by these two things we reap  
All the heart's harvest of its passionate sense,  
Death cannot be a blind, insensate sleep,  
'Tis but a change, a growth, a passing hence —

Hence through the portals of that guarded Door,  
On through the sweeping curtains of the Night,  
Unto those silenced voices we implore  
Once but to speak and whisper all is right.

Here, at this hour of changing Night and Day,  
Softly they sleep — why mourn the happy dead?  
Death never was creation's end, and say —  
Is the dead rose's fragrance vainly shed?

When the sad strain of a sweet violin  
Ceases to flow from out the four-stringed heart,  
When a soft voice to eyes long dry doth win  
Tears, trembling tears that from emotion start,

## CLIFTON CHURCH

When dimpled hands and rosebud lips are cold,  
When o'er her breast, from whence we drew our  
    life,

A mother's hands, no longer warm, we fold,  
Is it for naught our years with pain are rife?

Tell me not so, else would this churchyard seem  
Merely a place for storing useless lives;  
See where the roses speak the mourner's dream,  
Some memory dear that tender token gives.

Peace! Such a peace serene o'erbroods this place  
That melancholy Death for once seems fair,  
Lo! o'er the churchclock's numbers slowly pace  
Time's pointed fingers. Hark! the listening air

Vibrates with sound of nine slow, measured beats;  
Over the graves fast gathering gloom descends,  
And all the light, drawn westward, now retreats;  
High thro' grey Heaven the climbing Moon up-  
    wends.

Light from the Darkness! Vast star-dusted  
    fields,  
Hidden by Day's illumined vault, appear —

## CLIFTON CHURCH

Maybe the darkness we call Death reveals  
Soul-lighted realms unknown, unthought of here!

Wherefore I count the dead most happy, since  
Wide is the knowledge they, by Death, attain;  
Why at the thought of greater wisdom wince,  
If little loss includes the greater gain?

Rest, outworn dust! Yet, in thy resting, serve!  
Even this rose derives from thee its bloom.  
Lives are not vain that such an end reserve;  
This much I learn amid the gathering gloom!

## AFTER VACATION

(To "Sonnie"—D. O.)

**L**ET me think it over, now you are gone —  
I cherished those hours, every one,  
When your boyish laughter filled the air  
And broke my thought of pain and care.

We walked together by woodland ways,  
I, and you with the bright, young face,  
With a faith undimmed in a world of joy,  
And the open heart and mind of a boy;  
I loved your face, so frank, so fair,  
Finding my own lost boyhood there,  
And your chatter was more than speech of men,  
Fresh from a world I knew again,  
A world where dreams work out to truth,  
And the golden age is the age of youth.

The age of youth! — I scarce have known  
The sweets of it — too soon upgrown  
In a world of men where life is fierce

## AFTER VACATION

And the kindly heart is the heart to pierce.  
O happy boy! was it with surprise  
You saw the tears come into my eyes? —

For your words were light as your heart, and so  
You questioned me, and wished to know  
What made me sad — and I could not say,  
Though my heart knew well in a furtive way  
And my arm drew tighter around your own,  
For something told me I stood alone,  
That between your years and mine there swept  
The flood of memory wherein slept  
The boy's fond dreams — such dreams as you  
Are dreaming yet, and finding true!

O red, young lips and rosy cheeks!  
My heart for its long-lost boyhood seeks,  
Some echo of it rang in your voice,  
And hearing I could not help rejoice,  
And part of my love was love for you,  
And part for the dreams that have not come true.

## HABBERLEY VALLEY

**D**OWN in Habberley Valley the silver birches  
grow,

And all the winding mossy ways are glistening in  
the sun,

The birds are calling softly, and the fitful breezes  
blow —

O come with me! O come with me, before the  
day is gone!

There's oak and ash, and pine and fir, that clothe  
the Valley steeps,

There's soft green grass and fairy ferns, and in  
the breathless noon

I've seen the shady dell wherein Great Pan, wine-  
wearied, sleeps,

And oft he holds strange revels there at night  
beneath the Moon.

Down in Habberley Valley the silver birches  
grow,



## HABBERLEY VALLEY

And on a glorious Summer's day 'tis there I  
long to go —

Young Cupid hides with his bow and arrows  
Down where the winding foothpath narrows,  
O loudly, loudly lilt the birds, and softly, softly  
hum the bees,  
And from morn till eve the butterfly wings among  
the whispering trees!

Down in Habberley Valley I saw the Satyrs dance  
With woodland Nymphs and singing boys, their  
brows enchapleted  
With roses wild and ivy green. O many the love-  
lit glance  
They cast behind on seeing me ere through the  
wood they fled.

There's song and sunshine mingling with the odour  
of the pines,  
And once I heard the flutes of Pan across the  
Valley calling,  
I've seen the trees in gowns of gold when the  
burning sun declines,  
And stood in silent reverie as the dusk was softly  
falling.

## HABBERLEY VALLEY

Down in Habberley Valley the silver birches  
grow,  
And high above the trees at night the stars are  
all aglow,  
The Moon glides softly with silver feet,  
The nightjar calls, and lovers meet,  
And slowly, slowly on they go like shadows in a  
moonlit land,  
And the trees they rustle and laugh, and then  
grow silent, they understand.

Down in Habberley Valley a Poet stood alone  
And sighed to think of the sad world of turmoil  
whence he came,  
He breathed his spirit forth unto each flower and  
tree and stone,  
And all the fairy voices heard that called upon his  
name.

There's many a song you have not sung, O poet of  
the World!  
But you are young, and love us yet with innocent  
delight,

## HABBERLEY VALLEY

O have you heard the bluebells ring and seen the  
    roses curled,  
And drunk the nectar of the Gods, and found the  
    Heart of Light?

Down in Habberley Valley you'll hear the blue-  
    bells ring  
With many a chiming peal of song when all the  
    fairies sing,  
    The bees in bass hum in monotone,  
    The lark in alto sings alone,  
And sweetly, sweetly on the wind the woodland  
    song is upward borne,  
O come and hear the choral chant we sing in the  
    roseate Dawn!

Down in Habberley Valley the shadows gently  
    grow,  
And all around sweet voices blend their music with  
    the wind,  
While down the pathways lightly flit the shades of  
    long ago,  
O lover from the shadowland, perchance your  
    love you'll find!

## HABBERLEY VALLEY

There's many a voice shall sing no more with  
    earthly accents sweet,  
But you may hear the spirit song beneath the hush  
    of night,  
Ah, lover in the moonlit land, who knows but you  
    may meet  
With one long kiss, and one low sigh, and find the  
    Heart of Light?

Down in Habberley Valley the trees are weirdly  
    still,  
There's not a breeze among the leaves that  
    sleep in moonlight chill:  
The hooting owl, forgetting its prey,  
Shivers and longs for the sleep of Day,  
And quickly, quickly, beating hearts turn with the  
    changing tide of Time,  
And a star sails forth on the sea of Heaven as all  
    the planets chime.

Down in Habberley Valley the silver birches grow,  
The air is filled with the song of the birds and  
    everything is gay,

## HABBERLEY VALLEY

O come with me and wander where the pine-tree  
    branches throw  
A cooling shade for youth and maid upon a Sum-  
    mer's day.

There's many a tale you have not heard, O maid  
    with magic eyes,  
Ah, you may hear a song more sweet than ever  
    bird can sing,  
O let him take your hand in his and fill the air with  
    sighs,  
And he with kisses on your cheeks red roses there  
    shall bring.

Down in Habberley Valley the cuckoo's two-  
    fold voice  
Through all the air, from crag to crag, will call  
    " Rejoice! Rejoice! "  
Your hearts will beat as never before,  
And Love shall teach you his golden lore,  
Most happy Love in woodland ways! Sing out,  
    O birds! Croon soft, O breeze!  
O ye pines and firs in cloistral groves, chant your  
    most tuneful litanies!

## SHE MOVES, THE LADY OF MY LOVE

**S**HE moves, the lady of my love,  
A vision of delight,  
And everything she touches seems  
To glory in her sight;  
A white rose is not fair as she,  
Her lips are poppy-red,  
And I have pressed them in delight  
Until their colour fled;  
Her throat is as a marble tower  
That guards the citadel  
Where are two hills of virgin snow  
That Love has loved so well.  
Ah! ye who have not loved or seen  
The wonder of her breast,  
Nor ever found so warm and soft  
A refuge of deep rest,  
Nor felt her sweet, warm breath play o'er  
Your buried face and hair,  
Nor kissed the rose-red lips of love  
And worshipped one so fair —

## THE LADY OF MY LOVE

How can poor words have song enough

To sing her grace aright —

Is not the lady of my love

A vision of delight?

Her eyes are as twin torches in

The heaven of her face,

Her brow is white as ivory,

And in her speech I trace

The melodies which happy birds

Have taught her in the ways

Of sunny meadows filled with song

Thro' golden summer days.

Her hair is fragrant as the wind

That kisses violet meads,

And falls in tresses o'er the brow

Where Love his welcome reads;

Sweet as the rapture of the night

Is that of waking day,

And when together, hand in hand,

We walk the woodland way,

Her presence, like a breath of Spring,

Calls forth the flowers to greet

The happy glances of her eyes,

And kisses of her feet.



## THE LADY OF MY LOVE

The birds, when she approaches nigh,  
Sing louder than before,  
How lavish seems the woodbine bush  
With all its scented lore!  
And sunnier are the sunny ways,  
And bluer are the skies,  
To match the sunshine of her face,  
The blueness of her eyes;  
And then I knew a secret sense  
She has of Nature's mind,  
For once methought I saw, but now  
I know my sight was blind:  
She opens up a wonderland  
Wherein we daily tread:  
The lily is a mystery  
On which her soul has fed;  
She knows the secret of each flower  
Like any woodland elf,  
And tells me every secret, save  
The secret of herself,—  
And that I shall not crave, enough  
For me, in wonder bright,  
She moves, the lady of my love,  
A vision of delight.

## APPASSIONATA

SOMETIMES I wonder why I suffer so —  
A stranger's face, what could it mean for  
me?

Once seen by most forgotten soon — ah, no!  
For me those eyes, those lips will ever be  
The substance of the dreams that oft I dream.  
Your face attracted me, your voice rang clear,  
Your eyes were lustrous as sun-burnished pools,  
Your thought not of philosophies that bear  
The imprint of the academic schools —  
Therefore we spent the hours in vain delight,  
Riding the sparkling waves at early morn,  
Or playing tennis in the noon, while night  
Echoed with little loves that in our arms were  
borne.

And now I make lament — the old lament,  
Your loveliness will fade, your youth will die,  
And so I shudder, knowing days that went  
Swiftly and gloriously, like all things, by;

## APPASSIONATA

It gives me pain to think that youth must fade,  
I sat and gloried in your eyes' soft gleam,  
I gazed and thanked the Deity who made  
Such glory for my heart to feast upon —  
Yet never once I spake to you of this,  
For you those days are dead, are dead and  
gone:

For you, maybe, the moment held its bliss,  
Wherefore my joy is somewhat fraught with  
pain

Knowing those days will never come again,  
Knowing that you will laugh, and live content,  
While all my days are passed in dreary banish-  
ment.

Have I been born to live in vain — to make  
A god for memory's worship, only that?  
Will Beauty's fountain never flow and slake  
This thirsty soul of mine you wonder at?  
Oh, sometimes, such my love, I wish you dead  
That I may close your eyes, and kiss your  
mouth,

And place upon my heart your handsome head,  
Perchance my thirsty soul would ease its drouth,

## APPASSIONATA

For then, unknowing, I might worship you —  
Which once I did in secret lest you knew.

Ah! when we parted on our separate ways  
You little knew my pain — those happy days  
Were happy days for you, no more — to me  
They are as heirlooms, fraught with misery,  
For future years to hoard — when we are old,  
When Youth's fine glow is gone and all our days  
are cold.

Oh! frail, sad heart that falls in Beauty's snare  
And locks its love within a silent tomb,  
No words betray its utter grief — nor dare  
One look reveal its secret — 'tis my doom  
To suffer in mute agony nor speak  
The secrets those who love may to their loved  
ones break.

Pass from me face that moves my lips to song,  
That fills my heart with sadness, fills these eyes  
With tears that are for you, to you belong,  
These tears you must not see lest you despise!  
What are my restless nights that see your face  
Shining through silent darkness unto you? —

## APPASSIONATA

Something unknown, unguessed,—yet *I* can  
trace

Each subtlety of change, most sure and true —  
As when you smiled — I hold its magic yet,  
A radiance that never my fond heart will forget.

Therefore my joy is somewhat fraught with  
pain

Distilled from happy days recalled in vain;  
We met, we spoke, we parted, now with me  
The vision of your face is dwelling constantly.

## LOVE'S SILENCE

**I** HAVE not called you fair,  
True loverwise,  
Nor praised your golden hair  
And heavenly eyes,  
Nor pressed you warm and close  
Against my breast —  
For all things such as those  
May naught attest;

But I have dreamed of you  
In sleepless nights,  
Your speech has thrilled me through  
With sharp delights,  
And I have watched you move,  
With yearning heart —  
Passion of such deep love  
Could words impart?

Ah! dearest one, I break  
All bonds of speech

## LOVE'S SILENCE

With deeper thought. O take  
My love, and teach  
Language no lips can speak,  
Only souls hear,  
My words are all too weak,  
Your love so dear!



## LA GLORIOSA DONNA

(Beatrice)

### I

**T**HOU art the dream of the beauty dreamed,  
O lady fair,  
Radiant as the Moon hath seemed  
When all the breathless sky lay bare,  
Bathing itself in the glorious light;  
Thou art the Moon of the poet's night  
Once dark with care.

### II

The stars look not in the Moon's bright face,  
O lady mine!  
They hide themselves in abysmal space;  
And so mine eyes look not in thine  
Lest they should burn with a fervour found  
In the sanctuary of a love profound  
And a joy divine.

## LA GLORIOSA DONNA

### III

Wert thou the Helen that brought to Troy  
The Greeks of old,  
And filled with passion the beauteous boy? —  
Oh I marvel not that men were bold: —  
One smile of thine would be balm for death,  
And thy praise would take the dying breath  
Ere the lips were cold.

### IV

I wonder not that a poet loved  
Afar, in pain,  
Or that through Hell to Heaven he moved,  
And lived his life but a glimpse to gain  
Of the lady loved by a speechless boy;  
Mine eyes can worship thee, but my joy  
Seeks words in vain.

### V

The thought unuttered, like music, dies  
In a pulsing dream,  
For I dare not trust nor voice nor eyes

## LA GLORIOSA DONNA

In fear that a word or a look would seem  
Less than the meaning it should convey,  
And I pale as a star in the light of Day,  
    'Neath thine eyes' soft gleam!

## ANDROMACHE

(For Israel Zangwill)

**T**HE still noon was come, and all the  
steeps

Lay somnolent within the swimming air  
That breathed among the trees with heavy sighs  
Scented with asphodel. Beyond the meads,  
Now shadowless, the beechwoods, tressed with  
vine,

Lifted their branches in the golden light,  
And where the cloud-capped hill with many  
streams

Shone golden-veined, the leafy mountain ash  
Motionless slept; the moan of many doves,  
Within the poplars grown athwart the sky,  
Was breeze borne with the scent of lilac fields.

Along the border of the stream-girt plain,  
Leaving the city gates, a woman came  
Threading the olive woods by primrose paths  
That led to Thetis' Close (where Peleus once

## ANDROMACHE

In olden days brought Thetis to his bed),  
And through the sunny woodland up she toiled  
Towards the fountain by the elm trees' shade  
Where women came with pitchers all day long.

Slowly along the steep ravine she clomb  
As one deep-stricken to the heart with woe,  
And all her robes hung fold on fold about  
Her grief-expressive figure, dark, enswathed  
Save where the ivory brow gleamed forth above  
Two eyes that were as wells of sorrow where  
No sunlight ever glanced. Then as she moved,  
Her voice broke forth in sweetness, and the sigh  
Of welling tears ran o'er each pause, and all  
The woods were stilled as when a storm o'erclouds  
And thro' the brooding silence steals the wind.

“O mighty Zeus! Lord of the Courts of  
Heaven,

I would thou hadst not spared me to this day,  
Nor led me captive to the land of Hellas,  
For who shall hail me now? I once was fair  
And drew the lordly Hector to my breast,—  
White-armed Andromache whose lovely brow,

## ANDROMACHE

Shining beneath fair tresses, knew the kiss  
Of Priam's son. Alas! for I am she,  
Daughter of Aëtion, Hector sought  
Throughout Hypoplacus where long I dwelt  
Loved of my sire and brothers seven.

“ Ah! there

He came and kissed me, called me by my name —  
‘ O fair, white-browed Andromache! ’ he said,  
Taking my hand in his heroic clasp,  
And drawing me to bliss upon his breast;  
And thence to lofty Ilium, where his sire  
Ruled over mighty Troas, I was led  
All envied of my beauty and my lord.”

She ceased and moved towards the beechwood's  
shade,  
There sate, and in the noon made sad complaint.

“ O mighty Zeus! he was a lord of men —  
Strong-armed, high-browed, and leader in the  
field;  
Beloved of all, by me the best beloved,  
Who knew him more and loved him none the less.

## ANDROMACHE

Woe to the day that fickle-hearted Helen  
Came with her evil ways and luring eyes  
To wreak the fall of Ilium. When the plain  
Grew dark with armed Hellenes, he came forth,  
The great-souled Hector, seeking me, and there,  
Upon the high wall by the Scæan gates,  
He found me, with our babe Scamandrius  
Rocked in the nurse's arms, wherein he shone  
More like a beauteous star than hapless babe.

“ O mighty Zeus, my heart is breaking, hear!  
The lordly Hector took me in his arms  
And held me as I wept. For all his words  
Were sorrowful, as words of all farewells:  
And on his tongue a dreadful prophecy  
Foretold the end of married bliss, the end  
Of all the joys that make a husband dear;  
Of Death, and Ruin, when the lofty walls  
Of smitten Ilium crashed to earth. Whereon  
His eyes grew pitiful, his words grew sad  
And slow. He bade me venerate his name  
Who loved his country more than wife and babe,  
Holding the commonweal above his own;  
But I, with tearful pleadings, then besought



## ANDROMACHE

His pitiful thought towards me, of love bereft,  
And widowed of my lord and guardian soul;  
But all my words stayed not his stern resolve.  
With commendations sweet, he gave his son  
Into my sorrowing care, and bade me tend  
His training, to the end that men should praise  
The valour of the son above the sire.  
Then to my fragrant bosom low his brow  
Was bent in silence, and with soothing words  
He bade me go perform the homely tasks,  
And with one soul-surrendering farewell  
He turned, and went from sight for evermore."

As the wind in the dark and raging night  
Wails thro' the rain-drenched woods, and slowly  
dies

With fitful moans to silence, so her voice  
Came thro' the olives, o'er the sunlit sward  
And died unechoing in the sultry noon.  
Throwing the veil from off her moon-white brow  
And brushing back the tresses, with two eyes  
Whose passion lit the darkness of their woe,  
She lifted up her voice, and as she spake  
The startled birds flew out with glimmering wings,  
And sought the voiceless arbour of the pines.

## ANDROMACHE

“ O mighty Zeus! would hate implacable  
Could hound to Hades him who slew my lord!  
I then would praise thy justice, for in truth,  
Wherefore do men reap victory and fame  
Because a thousand women mourn their lords  
Whose pale, unbosomed faces looked no more  
Upon their woe-worn features? Fatherless,  
Young children listen for their sires, and curse  
The dreaded name Achilles, whose sure spear  
Pierced thro’ the heart of every Trojan dame.  
Divine Achilles, such his name of men,  
But all the venom of despair, the hate  
Of abject misery, I summon up,  
Nor words, nor imprecations breathed by ghouls  
Dwelling in Stygian darkness, hold the hate  
That labours in my heart towards this man.

“ He slew my father, and with rapine foul  
O’erran his rich dominions, brought to ruin  
The sovereign city, lofty-gated Thebes.  
Moreover, of the issue of my sire,  
His seven noble sons he slew; and I,  
The miserable wreckage of a line  
Illustrious in war, renowned in peace,

## ANDROMACHE

Beheld my butchered lord, with bleeding corse  
Dragged in the chariot's wake; and when the walls  
Of stricken Troy were sundered, from my arms  
The wailing babe was dashed to awful death."

Here ceased her voice in sorrow, and the hair,  
Falling about her shoulders, veiled the face  
With anguish bowed, and when she spake again  
Her cheeks were pale, her eyes saw not, but  
glowed

With wild intensity of boundless hate  
Whose passion froze the blood within her cheeks  
And marbled all the face in speechless grief.

"Jove, and ye other gods, pursue with wrath  
Thro' Hades' dawnless gates this man whose foul  
Remorseless conquest widowed me of love.  
Hearken, ye gods! I dwell a captive here  
Unransomed; to a base and loveless bed  
Forced with rude hands of Neoptolemus,  
The wolfish son begot of savage sire;  
And when my ravished limbs are freed at dawn  
They labour daily, on this toilsome steep,  
Carrying water from the fountain head.

## ANDROMACHE

Ye gods, I crave one mercy. Let me die  
That I may go to him whose lonely soul  
Waits comfortless by Lethe's songless shore;  
And in his glance the deathly glade shall smile  
Like sunlit meadows after springtide rain:  
The leafless trees shall blossom, and the birds  
Break forth in song, and they among the shades  
Who, shadowlike, move mournfully in gloom,  
Shall see a breaking light, breathe purer air,  
For radiant as a star engulfed in night  
My face will shine and seek him out, and we  
Together then shall sink in Lethe's flood  
Forgetting sorrow, for with him I know  
Where'er we dwell, Elysium will be."

## TRIBUTE

(For Edward J. O'Brien)

NOT with the silence of the night,  
Nor with the gladness of the day  
But in that gentle, dusky light  
Which gathers when the western way  
Runs to a sea of burning gold  
You came to me, like eventide  
Whose soft and trailing clouds enfold  
Meadow and mere and mountain-side.  
Your voice was as a mountain rill,  
Silver-sweet as its music-fall  
When shadows creep and birds are still  
And the great moon reigns over all.  
Arrayed in wonder like the night,  
Stars in the heaven of your face,  
You came to me with love's delight  
And found in me a resting-place.  
I have known great and gracious things  
And worshipped beauty everywhere,  
Sunsets and ruins, swallows' wings

## TRIBUTE

Skimming the surface of the mere,  
Roses filled with the morning dew,  
The creamy cones of chestnut-trees,  
Wonderful chords that thrilled me through  
When thin white fingers swept the keys,  
Old houses and old English lawns  
And meadows with their shining streams,  
Dogs with great eyes and timid fawns,  
Chairs and old chests, and books and dreams;  
Italy with her sunny squares  
And purple vineyards by the sea,  
The gay Piazza with its wares  
In wax and wood and ivory,  
And all the colour and the noise;  
Or the Blue Grotto in whose pool  
Falls a swift shower of diving boys  
Ungirdled, silver-limbed and cool;  
Spain with her tales of old romance,  
Her dark-eyed women fierce in love;  
That flower garden, southern France —  
“ I know these all, and yet above  
Their beauty and their charm you reign  
Supreme in glory like the moon  
O'er mountain mere and stream-girt plain,

## TRIBUTE

For in your eyes there is the boon  
Which hearts grown weary of the sun  
Seek and rejoice in, the great calm  
That love abiding gives to one;  
Yet in my heart a faint alarm  
Still lingers, born of this new bliss,  
And I have fear lest you should know it —  
To sing the rapture of your kiss  
You should have loved a better poet.



## IN THE WOOD

**D**EAR heart, through all the afternoon  
I slumbered where the woodland shade  
Was the deepest from the glare of June,  
And as the branches o'er me swayed

Singing that old-world song which pines  
For ever sing, as if they found  
A solace in their murmured lines,  
I weaved strange fancies to the sound;

And in each sigh I heard your sighs,  
And every whisper cried, "'Tis I!"  
Until I seemed to feel your eyes  
Fall on me, for I know not why —

Though you are dead, today I felt  
That union which of old we knew,  
The richness of your hair I smelt  
Until the greater wonder grew

## IN THE WOOD

That you were not, for, so it seemed,  
The years had brought no change since last  
Beneath the pine-trees' shade you dreamed  
With me that Future, now the Past.

Who knows, dear heart, perchance you move  
Nearer in love than I in thought,  
And with these premonitions prove  
Love is not far and comes unsought.

## A CHILD'S EYES

EYES of a child — twin worlds of light,  
What have ye seen that visions bright  
Still kindle with a Paradisal hue:  
Something retained of all the heavenly wonder,  
The glorious light,  
The realm ethereal that angels view,  
Where worlds are rent asunder:  
Something of these within remembered sight  
Make of them worlds of light?

Yea, even so it must be, we are grown  
Heavy with pain and moan,  
That all the wonder of this wondrous world,  
The stars that, censor-wise,  
Swing down the vaulted Night,  
The glowing panorama of the skies  
When through the Dawn's wide portal sweeps the  
Sun  
'Mid roseate clouds unfurled,  
Ruling his realm of light,

## A CHILD'S EYES

Yea, even these no longer stir the heart,  
No longer find reflection in our eyes,  
Nor wake the wonder of unknowing days,  
When, with unasking, unperturbèd gaze,  
    A child's wide eyes,  
    Disdainful of being wise,  
Something of all their glory to the earth impart.

Therefore I voyage in thy fancy-bark,  
Through thy great wonders dark,  
Knowing they mirror all the heaven that glows  
    (Since even wayside pools can mirror Heaven,  
        How much to thee is given!)  
Like an unfurlèd rose,  
Petal on petal, fragrant with the wind  
    That blows o'er all mankind;  
And lo! with sails outblown,  
My swift bark wings o'er seas whose undertone  
Echoes the chanting of that Paradisal zone  
    Whence lately, life-elated,  
    With joy precipitated,  
Thou, little child, caught'st up those wondrous  
    skies  
    Into thy magic eyes,

## A CHILD'S EYES

Bringing to earth the glory they had seen,  
Retaining still the lustre of what THEY once had  
been!

On thro' the mirrored pools of thy reflective sight,  
On, o'er the bar of Heaven, the swift bark sped,  
Thro' countries of the Dead,  
The Dead so dead in that, as yet unborn,  
They wait for Morn,  
Even as thou didst once, in state forlorn,  
When at the summoning trumpet call of Life,  
The curtain rising on the Stage of Strife,  
With yearning limbs, at last  
The dread inaction past,  
Robed in prenatal glory down to Earth  
They joyfully will sing to wombs of human birth;

On thro' the land where hands unseen have  
wrought  
The rainbow's glory and the poet's thought,  
Upward I sailed, still sailed, lo! Paradise!  
The argent-gated City set with stars  
And sunshine-fretted bars;  
Thence, ere they lifted for my passing through —

## A CHILD'S EYES

“ Say! What most treasurest  
On Memory's palimpsest? ”

In angel-throated accents came the cry:

And I,

Thought not nor knew,  
But straightway answerèd,  
Whereat the bars upsped,

“ O Keeper of the Gates of Paradise,  
A child's bright eyes!

For visions of this realm they hold most true! ”

Then in great glory, loud, hosanna-wise,  
Rang all the quivering skies —

“ Light in a baby's eyes  
Cometh from Paradise! ”

And thus in joinèd anthem sang the stars,  
Thus all the ways of Heaven rang with song,  
Till I, among

The diapason music of the swinging firmament,  
With fear downbent,  
And lo! with glow

Of steadfast light and unperturbèd gaze,  
Once more with great amaze,

My waking sense outdreamed its dream and  
saw —

## A CHILD'S EYES

No starry plains of Heaven, no Paradise,  
No Court where sat enthroned the Giver of the  
    Law,  
No! greater my surprise —  
Only a child's bright eyes!

How little and how mean  
The fruits of those who glean  
The harvest fields of knowledge: scholarship  
    Fades in the sight of that unthinking glance  
    'Neath which, as in a trance,  
The Universe unvows her vestalship,  
And from her unseen face lets fall the veil  
'Neath which the glimmering form, but half  
    discerned,  
    Lay hid from one who yearned,  
Who cried, with passionate craving for the truth,  
While swift, onpassing years with little ruth,  
    Hearing the cry, beheld him strive and fail;  
And lo! when Science with her ordered arts  
    Had striven, with the cunning she imparts,  
And, baffled, stood before the fine intricacies  
    Of this Earth's mysteries,  
A little child with sunshine in his smile,



## A CHILD'S EYES

With glint of roguish wile,  
With one low cry of innocent delight,  
Opened his eyes so bright  
And saw the rainbow's beauty, while the seer  
Saw nothing there,  
For Knowledge, specious Critic,  
Shattered the rainbow's glory to colours analytic!

Therefore unto the child, methinks, is given  
The insight into Heaven,  
For we are lost to wonder in this world,  
While in our facts upcurled,  
We live as lives the grub within the rose,  
Eating the beauty from the heart of things  
Nor heed wherein the secret of it springs:

Yet eyes, in which  
The rainbow's glory lives again, receive  
The impress of the wonder they perceive,  
Nor guess the secret of it all, nor grieve;  
Wherefore am I,  
Unknowing, but observant, greatly rich,  
Become the treasure-house of Beauty's store  
That, more and more,  
The wonders that delight my seeing eye,  
May therein lie:

## A CHILD'S EYES

So thus to keep the rapture of the child,  
Whose simple heart with Beauty is beguiled,  
Most happily beguiled!

Once on a time,  
That sad, all-suffering time,  
When presaging song had filled my heart with  
    woe,  
I chanced to go,  
A forlorn songster, smuttred with the grime  
Of the most heartless City of the World,  
Sickened with undeserving long neglect,  
    Into a place where spread  
On lettered shelves the great, undying dead,  
Whose singing souls, in pilgrimage elect,  
Still wing them down the ringing ways of Time,  
With Fame's immortal banners o'er them furled:

And taking down a vellum-covered book,  
I sought a nook  
Wherein to scent the fragrance of its rhyme;  
Ah, then how shall I tell this thing so great,  
What song, what lyric rapture magical  
Can fitly tell an act grown tragical

## A CHILD'S EYES

With cherished fondness in my foolish heart? —

    This little act beyond all estimate,

For 'twas at lowest ebb of Fortune's flood

A child intuitively understood,

    A little child that in most tragic-wise

Looked with her big wide eyes,

Then spake, and changed my Hell to singing  
Paradise!

    O voice! O child's sweet voice!

    That made my heart rejoice,

That shattered all the bonds that bound me in  
despair,

    Beside my chair,

A fairy book you showed me with delight,

A little trusting, wide-eyed fairy wight

    With golden hair —

No Titian's Madonna e'er embraced

    A child more fair,

More sweet, more innocent, more angel-faced!

Therefore, methinks, unto the child is given

    The insight into Heaven,

Nor solely that, but into human hearts,

## A CHILD'S EYES

How otherwise that messenger divined  
A human voice grown kind  
In multitudinous solitude I pined?

Yea, Love itself imparts  
To the clear freshness of a child's young eyes;  
The newborn child retains  
The undimmed vision of the heavenly plains!

Eyes of a child — twin worlds of light,  
What have ye seen that visions bright  
Still kindle with a Paradisal hue —  
Something retained of all the heavenly wonder,  
The glorious light  
Of realms ethereal that angels view,  
Where worlds are rent asunder  
And God rides in the thunder? —  
Something of these within remembered sight  
Make of thine eyes twin worlds of most celestial  
light!

## THE DARK YEARS



## CHARING CROSS

**A**LL through the night in silence they come  
and go,  
The Red Cross cars with headlights low,  
And maimed humanity on stretchers lain  
Glides down the streets of London—while I stand  
Watching this slow processional of pain.  
All through the night unending flows the stream  
Whence now and then a weary, bloodless hand  
Answers the greeting of the silent crowd;  
A pale and stricken face smiles back again  
Upon the kind, dim faces that throng as in a  
dream.

Over them as they journey, patiently bowed  
A nurse keeps watch in fear lest now at last  
The fluttering spirit leave the battered cage,  
And, eager for eternity, slip past  
The guardian tending the poor, broken frame  
With its disc and number and stencilled name.



## CHARING CROSS

And as I watch, a rebel thought  
Stirs in my mind, for strange it seems  
That down this highway of pain unending  
There flow the streams  
Of human traffic homeward brought,  
Broken and useless, marred with terrible scars,  
Eyeless and limbless and shattered, while under  
the stars  
Flow other streams that, outward wending,  
Carry the youth of the nation in splendid vigour —  
And those streams flow into these at the touch of  
a trigger!

Long months of training that splendid humanity  
needed,  
The toil and brain of a nation evolved it, the  
wealth  
Of the wide world's meadows and mines was  
brought for its use,  
And with careful eyes and hands it was weeded  
and weeded  
Until it was virile with courage and perfect  
health;

## CHARING CROSS

And here is the end of it all, and we count the  
loss

Recording the glory, forgetting this human refuse,  
Left by extravagant war — borne away in the  
night

Swiftly and silently. God! here again at a cross  
Crucified man in a dark world dies; the sight  
Burns to the brain, and I cry, as once One cried —  
“My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken  
me?” — then

I watch with dumb anguish the endless procession  
of men,

The remnants picked up from the waste in the  
fields; they who died

Flow no more in the stream, they can rest; and  
only it matters

That Science should skilfully mend what it skil-  
fully shatters.

## ECLIPSE

**H**OW shall we sing, love, in these days  
When darkness covers all the earth,  
And Death alone has splendid praise,  
How can our dreams find happy birth?

There is no music in the wood  
But mocks the heavy heart of me,  
This is the age of iron and blood  
And sisters none hath Charity.

Out of the darkness into light  
At dawn the sons of men will come,  
Then shall begin our tireless fight,  
We shall not in that hour be dumb;

There is a question to be asked,  
There is an answer to be given,  
And traitors who shall stand unmasked,  
And new worlds made from old worlds riven.

## FUTILITY

THEY send me, Charles, long letters on your  
death,

Full of fair phrases culled from poetry  
That do not blind me — let them save their  
breath;

The nectared lies of immortality,  
The sounding rhetoric, the pompous phrase,  
The talk of supreme sacrifice, the great  
Reward — what are these 'gainst your withered  
days,

Your dear lost face, the squalor of your fate?  
That you were brave I know, but still you clung  
To life that meant so much; they say you cried  
In that last hour feeling you were so young,  
And desperately fought for life — and died.  
These letters, Charles, they mock me with their  
lies,

Their borrowed phrases that belittle life  
And love and laughter — I can see your eyes  
As once they glowed, your body like a knife

## FUTILITY

Tempered and flashing in a summer sea,  
Or hear your voice enraptured over books,  
Or in the bathroom singing merrily  
At early morn, and days in river nooks  
And tennis sets — these memories all seem  
Like ghosts that haunt your room now you are  
gone,

And make me think your end is but a dream,  
How can it be the end — at twenty-one?  
But when I read these letters, then I know  
You will not come again, nor does their praise  
Lighten the heaviness of this great blow,  
I cannot kiss your brow, nor see the place  
Where they have left you; as they write of fame,  
Your “splendid gift,” my only thought is this —  
What will they care ten years hence for your  
name,

Who cares a damn who died at Salamis?

## THE DAYS OF OLD

**T**HEY are gone — the friends I had,  
Through the day, alone and sad,  
Through the places where we met  
I walk, dreaming of them yet;  
And the voices once so dear  
Never break upon my ear;  
All are gone — no voices call,  
No familiar footsteps fall,  
Friends of mine, friends of mine.

They are gone and with them went  
All the happy days we spent;  
In the café or the street  
There are left no friends to greet  
With the cheery words of old,  
And the empty places hold  
Each a ghost of memory  
That most faintly smiles at me;  
Friends of mine, friends of mine.

## THE DAYS OF OLD

They are gone, and I am left  
Like a thing of life bereft,  
Holding dear the things they said —  
Treasured things now they are dead;  
And at night the old refrain  
Rises from their throats again,  
And from battlefields they rise  
With the old light in their eyes,  
Friends of mine, friends of mine.

They are gone — some will return,  
But for some in vain I yearn,  
Death has claimed their swift young lives,  
And their fame alone survives;  
In the night-time oft I cry  
To the unrelenting sky —  
O dead comrades, dear and true,  
Would that now I slept with you,  
Friends of mine, friends of mine.



## THE RETURN

**P**ROUD to be hers, of England, war-worn,  
shattered,

Yet holding up their heads in regal poise,  
They will return, her death-forsaken boys,  
Triumphant, though the ranks are scarred and  
scattered

Beyond formation evermore, so battered  
And broken, memories only, swept like toys  
In disarray — yet once with mighty noise,  
With drums they marched away when Honour  
mattered.

When Honour mattered! Now returning, these,  
How shall our Honour stand, our duty seem  
To those who in the conflict kept a dream  
Sacred, a thought of meadows, pools and trees  
Of homeland — shall this England, that is ours  
By their great strength, reward not their spent  
pow'rs?

## INHERITANCE

**D**EAD statesmen, prophets, poets, princes,  
kings,  
And long dumb generations of this land  
Who gave no less the labour of the hand,  
And strength of sinew, those just offerings  
You made are ours, this generation springs  
From dreams that rose within you when you  
scanned  
The future and with valiant purpose planned  
Our large inheritance of splendid things.

We are the heirs of greatness, for our blood  
Is regal with the dynasty of Fate,  
We must not fail those we perpetuate  
Nor check the purpose of that swelling flood  
Which sweeps through time down hills of History  
To Freedom in world-wide humanity.

## THE DELIVERER

**N**O star will herald him, no trumpets blare,  
The age that gives him birth shall hardly  
know

It travails for his sake, nor watch him grow  
To greatness; yet the agony it bare  
Hath formed him, and a providential care  
Moulded his mind with great events; the flow  
Of adverse currents caught him, and the blow  
That shook the nation wakened a spirit rare.

His eyes are lit with Hope, his heart has heard  
Harmony triumphing where Tumult reigns,  
And Truth, traduced, speaks from his mouth the  
word

That is not shaped for dual ends, nor feigns  
Construction while it undermines. No bird  
Hails Dawn with surer flight than he sustains!

## ON SOME POLITICIANS OF THE PERIOD

**I**S this the England of those glorious men  
Who wrought the charter of our liberty?  
Hampden, doth not thy spirit rise again  
In wrath against this heavier tyranny,  
And thou, O Cromwell, swift to answer when  
Liberty was imperilled, wilt thou be  
Silent in this dark hour, nor Milton's pen  
Command to write thy thunderous decree?

For England is a land oppressed where breed  
The vultures of the law, a brood that cries  
Over the living flesh whereon they feed;  
Humanity, immersed in blood and lies,  
Pollutes the air of Heaven with its stench,  
And Death strides gaily on from trench to trench.

## LIBERTY IMPERILLED

**N**OT without cause, just and unshakeable,  
Will we surrender up the cherished prize  
Of individual liberty, so well  
And nobly held; for if the future lies  
In danger yet no warrant to despise  
Ancestral freedom, power invincible,  
Moulding our nation's form, doth yet arise —  
Freedom alone can hold the force of Hell.

Therefore in British hearts this day the thought  
Of mighty heritage shall make us calm  
Amid tumultuous conflict, and maintain  
Forces unchallenged, victories unbought  
Of craven minds coerced by war's alarm,  
Whose madness wrecks a world to count a gain.

## DAWN

**T**HIS is our Dawn, our Day! Are we not  
blessed

Whose eyes behold this miracle of Time,  
This swift transition from the filth and grime  
That choked the body of a world oppressed,  
Which Custom bound, Convention overdressed  
And fell Tradition drugged? — a pantomime  
Of puppets dancing in the yellow lime,  
Wealth's minions in a farce by Fate suppressed.

Delivered from that Night, now we are men,  
Creation is within our hands! the vision  
Dreamed in the darkness will rise up again  
From ruins of a sick world's dead derision,  
And Youth shall know its hour! Youth that on  
Death  
Has looked and turns to Life with quickened  
breath!

## I WILL ARISE

(For Holbrook Jackson)

**I** WILL arise.

Too long has the night been over land,  
For, the terror departing, the dawn is at hand,  
The morning skies  
Tremble from pearl into red,  
And the growing light  
Awakens a world that was dead.

On the face of the world let the dawn break,  
Oh never again  
Shall this midnight of madness return,  
The dumb anguish, the pain  
Unforgotten with letters of fire that brand and  
burn —  
Not these, O Lord, not these be ours again.

We have suffered that Youth should be taken  
And spent as a breath,



## I WILL ARISE

We knew that we gambled with Life, we con-  
sorted with Death,  
And prayed for the dawn, when the reason should  
cry —  
“ Great spirit of Man, awaken!  
Or evermore die ! ”

Then in his heart each man said low —  
“ Many and many, in quenchless nobility ever  
They marched with a wonderful light in their  
eyes,  
With great courage aglow  
They arise and depart and never, never  
Return to the hearts for whom they made sacri-  
fice.”

I will arise,  
For it shall not be that this gift of Youth  
Be squandered and scattered as sand  
For redemption of Truth;  
The flame that from Ignorance sprang and by  
Hatred was fanned,  
Shall it burn for ever across a shrivelled land?

## I WILL ARISE

Night that was dark with such hatred, the Dawn  
    blows cold,

The fire of conquest dies, the unbridled lust  
Sickens with surfeit, the fields enfold

Millions that fell in the clamour and now are dust;  
And they who wait in thy darkness and ceaseless  
    pray,

They are older than years,

Their sleepless eyes

Keep vigil, and tearless, having shed all tears,

They wait, and waiting say —

“ In that dawn with confession to make I will  
    arise.”

Youth that has died with such wonderful grace,

Young limbs that ran lightly in deadly ways,

Is there nothing bequeathed immortally ours

Save this — in a maddened world, as a tiger de-  
    vours

The deer in the glade, implacable Hate devoured

Your beauty, and left but a race deflowered?

Yet Spring when it comes will seem yours,

The immutable grace of the earth will recall you  
    again,

## I WILL ARISE

The flooded meadow, soft twilight, the lamp in-  
doors,

The chair and the chessboard, the unfinished book  
Turned down at a page where Fate wrote  
“FINIS” — ah! pain

That sears the heart betrayed by a casual look.

The new world in the rayless night  
Lies somewhere, as sure as the song of the bird,  
As the sun whose light  
And warmth fail never the seed in the deep earth  
stirred;

And since by the folly of man, by his blundering  
thought

This tribulation, this hell was conceived and  
brought

To deadly fruition of purpose that holds him in  
terror,

The dawn is ours to herald; confessing error,  
Redeemed by Youth's most splendid sacrifice,  
We will arise.

The dead in the valley sleep, the dawn-wind  
blows,

Beautiful sleepers are they whose names none  
knows,

## I WILL ARISE

Whose memory burns fainter through the years  
That pass until a generation grows  
Which cares not if they late or early slept;  
But I have kept  
Under my anguish, deep in a well of tears,  
Springs of grief that will dry not, that will flood  
At every slight neglect of future years,  
And when their sacrifice stirs not the blood  
And some make question of this stricken time,  
Daring to doubt the wisdom of the price,  
Lord, Thou shalt see then with what wrath sublime  
In witness of their faith I will arise!

## LUSITANIA

SAILOR, what do you see that you stand  
With quivering lips and trembling hand,  
For the sea is calm and the sky is clear,  
What do you fear?

"Sailor, why are you dumb, the sea  
Is soft with the summer days to be,  
The gulls flash by in the sunlit air,  
Why do you stare?"

"Oh, look in the sea if you would learn,  
For this is the day the dead return,  
The murdered women and children rise  
With pitiful cries.

"Their white hands beckon us from the wave,  
They never rest in their moving grave,  
They sigh their woes to the moaning deep,  
And never sleep.

## LUSITANIA

“ They wait for an end which they know is sure,  
Then they will rest and rise no more;  
*Vengeance is mine* — they heard God say —  
*I will repay.*”

## WATCHMEN OF THE NIGHT

**L**ORD of the seas' great wilderness,  
The light-grey warships cut the wind,  
The headland dwindles less and less,  
The great waves, breaking, drench and blind  
The stern-faced watcher on the deck,  
While England fades into a speck.

Afar on that horizon grey  
The sleepy homesteads one by one  
Shine with their cheerful lights as day  
Dies in the valley and is gone,  
While the new moon comes o'er the hill  
And floods the landscape, white and still.

But outward 'mid the homeless waste  
The battle fleet held on its way;  
On either side the torn seas raced,  
Over the bridge blew up the spray;  
The quartermaster at the wheel  
Steered through the night his ship of steel.



## WATCHMEN OF THE NIGHT

Once, from a masthead, blinked a light —  
The Admiral spoke unto the Fleet;  
Swift answers flashed along the night,  
The charthouse glimmered through the sleet;  
A bell rang from the engine-room,  
And, ere it ceased — the great guns' boom.

Then thunder through the silence broke  
And rolled along the sullen deep;  
A hundred guns flashed fire and spoke,  
Which England heard not in her sleep  
Nor dreamed of, while her fighting sons  
Fed and fired the blazing guns.

Dawn broke in England, sweet and clear,  
Birds, in the brake, the lark in heaven  
Made musical the morning air,  
But distant, shattered, scorched and riven,  
Gathered the ships — aye, dawn was well  
After the night's dark, raging hell.

But some came not with break of light,  
Nor looked upon the saffron dawn;

## WATCHMEN OF THE NIGHT

They keep the watch of endless Night,  
On the soft breast of ocean borne.  
O waking England, rise and pray  
For sons who guard thee night and day.

SCAPA FLOW, May, 1916.

## THE DOVER PATROL

**W**E are the grey destroyers,  
The hornets of the Fleet;  
The tall ships, our employers,  
Disdain our lonely beat.  
Through night and day we prowl about,  
Take one turn in and one turn out,  
Not very far from Dover,  
Through every hour of the twenty-four  
We hang about the Huns' back door —  
Lord! what a life for a young sea rover!

We make no claim to beauty,  
The big guns know us not;  
We never dress for duty —  
One suit is all we've got.  
We oil ourselves, for speed's our rôle,  
We'd race aught floating to the Pole  
And back again to Dover!  
Yet every hour of the twenty-four

## THE DOVER PATROL

We bar the dismal Huns' back door —  
Lord! what a life for a young sea rover!

We barter with the chances  
That snatch our living breath,  
For danger so entrances  
We run full speed to death;  
“The Lords of the Admiralty regret  
That H.M.S. ——” — and then forget  
The T.B.D. from Dover.

“ Yet every hour of the twenty-four  
Somebody watches the Huns' back door —  
Lord! what an end for a young sea rover!

DOVER STRAITS, December, 1916.

LINES ON A PORTRAIT  
OF A MIDSHIPMAN KILLED IN ACTION

**A** BOY'S face wherein beauty lies  
As in all things untouched by age,  
A waking wonder in those eyes  
That scarce had looked on Life's first page,  
And all that beauty and that grace  
For ever gone through Time and Space!

When last I saw those lips they laughed,  
Those eyes were lit with sunshine then,  
Who guessed a sudden, bitter draught  
Would find in you a man 'mid men,  
That strength could in such frailty lie,  
And youth with such high courage die?

I do not ask why unto you  
So brief a span of happy days  
Was given — for there was much to do,  
To see, to suffer, ere the praise

## LINES ON A PORTRAIT

And pain of Life were yours, through years  
Of love, and happiness, and tears.

I only know that we who move  
Through heat of noon to shadowed hours  
Covet your peace, and oft reprove  
The chance that will not make it ours;  
Not yours to know the failing strength,  
The creeping of the shadow's length.

For ere the splendour of your noon,  
Ere beauty had unfolded quite,  
In eagerness you sought full soon  
To part the curtain of our Night,  
And now you know — perhaps, dear lad,  
Your only pain that we are sad.

It may be heaven with your laughter  
Rings, and is filled with youthful noise,  
And we who wearily come after  
Shall be amazed to hear a boy's  
Glad greeting, and in your bright face  
Find of that battle-rage no trace.

## VIGIL

(For Francis Grierson)

**W**HEN daylight fades and darkness creeps  
Over the wide and shuddering sea,  
Wreathed in mist, like wandering ghosts,  
The silent greyhounds guard the coast  
While England sleeps.

What can the landsman know of the deeps,  
And the long, lone watch in the tense, dark night;  
Sleepless vigil of bloodshot eyes,  
The firm, set jaw of the man who dies  
While England sleeps?

The loud wind moans, and the dark storm leaps  
Over the waste of the foam-flecked waves,  
Thunder roars from the throats of steel,  
In deathly throes the doomed ships reel,  
While England sleeps.



## VIGIL

When the white arm of the pale dawn swept  
Over the rim of the barren sea,  
No sign remained of the battle fought,  
The heroes dead, the victory bought  
While England slept.

## A NAVAL NURSERY RHYME

SING a song of submarines, a U-boat full of  
Huns,  
A homeward-bound old trader with ever-ready  
guns;  
The chief was in the engine-room, the skipper at  
the wheel —  
A periscope, a smooth track, a shell of polished  
steel.

Sing a song of submarines, the skipper swore an  
oath;  
It's "Hard to Port! Full Speed Ahead!" He  
rams her, nothing loath;  
The King was in the Council-room, the Queen  
was with him too,  
The skipper wears a medal and — there's food  
for me and you.

MILFORD HAVEN, March, 1918.

## THE AIRMEN

**Z**EUS, with the old gods all at play,  
Has lost the realm he ruled so long,  
For younger gods are born today  
Whose new-fledged wings are swift and strong;  
So Zeus, his kingdom overrun,  
Has packed his thunderbolts away  
And seeks a new place in the sun.

## PRAYER FOR THE PILOT

**L**ORD of Sea and Earth and Air,  
Listen to the Pilot's prayer —  
Send him wind that's steady and strong,  
Grant that his engine sings the song  
Of flawless tone, by which he knows  
It shall not fail him where he goes;  
Landing, gliding, in curve, half-roll —  
Grant him, O Lord, a full control,  
That he may learn in heights of Heaven  
The rapture altitude has given,  
That he shall know the joy they feel  
Who ride Thy realms on Birds of Steel.

## THE NEUTRAL ZONE

**S**AID Death: " This is an insult grave,  
That men should fly as birds and dare  
Transgress the boundaries I gave;  
It shall not be! " Then through the air  
Swept down, on vengeance sworn.

↓ Said Life: " It is a neutral zone,  
I bade them neither Yea nor Nay."  
↓ Cried Youth: " I claim it for my own! "  
Death heard and watched, then turned away  
Powerless 'neath such scorn.

## LIFE

**T**HEY do not live who only know  
The dull procession of Life's flow,  
They have no faith who never  
Risk all, and in one hour of youth  
Reach the subliminal self where Truth  
Floods light and crowns endeavour.

They do not die who find in death  
The great adventure, the first breath  
Whence came this life from God:  
Who, taking wings, laugh down at earth,  
Leap skywards, and with boyish mirth  
Run where the angels trod.

THOUGHTS IN SPRING, 1916, WHILE  
EUROPE WAS AT WAR

**T**HROUGH all the afternoon the throbbing  
car

Raced up the hills, and took the winding road,  
Past villages and hamlets clustering round  
The little churches standing in the peace  
Of country solitude, until we gained  
A valley where the river broadly flowed  
Along a track of silver, wending through  
Verdurous meadows where the browsing kine  
Found pasturage and undisturbèd peace;  
And there we paused, as though a spirit called,  
With the small voice of solitude, for rest;  
What sweet content breathed from the little vale!  
It seemed the elemental strife which man  
Can ne'er subdue, found there no sure abode;  
And I, depressed, with thoughts too deep for  
words,  
Weighted with vague unrest, intangible,  
As when one dreams and on the morrow finds



## THOUGHTS IN SPRING, 1916

But shadowy conception of the things  
Substantial in imagination — drew  
Apart from those who walked with me, their  
    hearts

Unshadowed with regret, their voices raised  
In joyful accents, for I could not join  
With their light-hearted gaiety, but felt  
The burden of the time weigh down my soul,  
Checking the generous flood of happiness.

Below me in the valley, towards the verge  
Of the high hills, from whence the splendrous sun  
Poured forth in golden flood, the village lay  
With warm red roofs, with spirals of blue smoke  
Taking their upward course among the trees  
Where thrush and blackbird and the linnet vied  
In rapturous welcome to the Spring; above,  
Lost in the unclouded blue of this fair day,  
A solitary lark sang out, as one  
Enamoured with his voice, which hath no art  
But only wild desire; upon the hill  
A cottage window, like a burnished shield,  
Caught up the radiant sun, and as the day  
Slowly declined towards eventide, the light

## THOUGHTS IN SPRING, 1916

Drew westward through vermilion bars, and  
glowed,  
And changed and waned until the shadowy veil  
Of noiseless eve fell over plain and hill;  
Around me in the hedgerows, where the buds  
Gave promise of long days of leafiness,  
The happy birds sang their last requiem,  
And over all the countryside peace reigned.

But in the silence all my thoughts were turned  
To where no eventide brought peace, no dark  
Gave labour pause, but only deeper strife  
And countless horrors moving in black hordes  
With stalking Death, Discord and speechless  
Fear.

O God who formed this world, with countless  
gifts  
Bestowed the changing hours, who filled the dawn  
With matin song of birds, who blest the day  
With labour in the open fields, the night  
With soft refreshing slumber, and o'erhung  
With countless stars the spaces of the sky  
Whereby the consciousness of man should feel

## THOUGHTS IN SPRING, 1916

The thrill and mystery when beauty wakes  
Slowly to birth in Life's vast harmony —  
Has Thou despaired, withdrawn Thyself from  
this

Dark world where Chaos rules, and millions  
wage

A war for some deep rights, some purpose held  
Inviolable from change? Dear God! in life  
Is not the struggle fierce enough, the pangs  
Of wild despair, vain hopes and shattered dreams,  
Sufficient for the misery of man,  
That all the earth in Honour's name should be  
Saddened with human blood, and groan with  
war —

All that dark butchery which, with banners brave,  
And martial music, stalks the land and draws  
The praise of the unhappy ones whose woe  
Is gilded with the glory of great deeds;  
For this hath Science won her victories,  
And vanquished fell disease, outstamped the  
plague

And placed within the hands of man the power  
To rule the elements, girdle the globe,  
Conquer the air, annihilate all space

## THOUGHTS IN SPRING, 1916

And time — that Death might loom more ominous,

And Hell, with new inventive force disgorge  
Fresh horrors beyond dreams' imagining?

Nay, 'tis a false corruption of the mind

Too avaricious grown, that holding dear

Power and wealth and territory stakes

A nation's happiness on one wild chance

Of ruthless acquisition for the few,

And basely doth appeal in Right's fair guise

To those who answer when their Country's name

Is challenged; thus in honour do they die,

Nor ask the cause — these heroes, poor, obscure

In Life's unnoticed walks where toil and want

Crush out the finer feelings, hold subdued

The spirit which at danger's call is quick

To move and fight for some faint privilege

Scarcely observed in time of peace, but now,

When danger threatens, high advanced in claim

Of act reciprocal; and all the world

Thus answers, doing that it loathes, yet held

In bondage of false service which betrays

The highest ends of life and liberty.

Thus nation wars with nation, and the earth

Groans with the carnage; desolation dwells

## THOUGHTS IN SPRING, 1916

Naked throughout the land, and Want's chill  
touch

Withers the children's happiness; the homes  
Resound no longer with loved voices, Death  
Stands by the thresholds where the broken hearts  
Mourn o'er the relics of departed joy.

O my sad country! 'tis for thee I mourn,  
Seeing this misery of war's victories!  
The conquests which are but embannered lies  
And bring no solace to the dead, to those  
Who, more than dead, live on devoid of hope!  
'Tis that I love thee well I make complaint  
Against the evil of this time when man,  
So far advanced towards visionary goals,  
Falls back to barbarism, and excels  
The spirit of the past in war alone;  
And while the solemn light of evening broods  
O'er this fair land where Spring hath come again  
With its rich promise, and its youthful joy,  
I think of those young hearts now stilled, those  
boys  
With glowing faces, glossy hair, and eyes  
Undimmed with weariness of life, for whom  
The springtime promise hath not been fulfilled;

## THOUGHTS IN SPRING, 1916

For no glad Summer sees their glory; Time  
Mated their Spring with Winter, and the years  
Will wax and wane, the flowers bloom and die,  
The birds will sing, depart, and the pale moon  
Keep her nocturnal watches, but for them —  
The cold and silent dead, these glories pass  
And dust becomes a little dust.

And yet  
Fondly their memory lives within our hearts  
Ennobled, for they died and wrung from death  
Admission of their triumph; untraduced,  
Their spirits with undomitable power  
Soared to the heights whereon no mundane cause,  
Or questionable purpose, could evoke  
Thoughts of self-interest; and therein lies  
The glory and the pathos of their doom.  
Then as I mused the gathering night drew on,  
Subduing all beneath its even flood;  
Stars, and the rising moon, and the low sigh  
Of the soft-breathing earth; and then a call  
From my returning friends, on the soft wind,  
And sadly towards them, through the gloom I  
went.



## MILLENNIUM

**L**ORD GOD, whose hand rules over Time,  
Whose love unshaken watches o'er  
Thy nations spread from clime to clime,  
From Arctic waste to southern shore:  
Lord God, who rulest over all,  
Hast Thou not heard Thy children call?

We are but children in Thy sight  
Who cannot see but blindly grope  
Towards the everlasting light  
That burns beyond our earthly scope;  
Lord God, with wisdom give us grace  
To look more closely on Thy face.

The Earth's dominion man hath had —  
Yet found in it desires that breed  
A prouder race whose hearts are sad  
With fruitless toil, insatiate greed;  
Lord God, we weary of the years  
That render us but blood and tears.

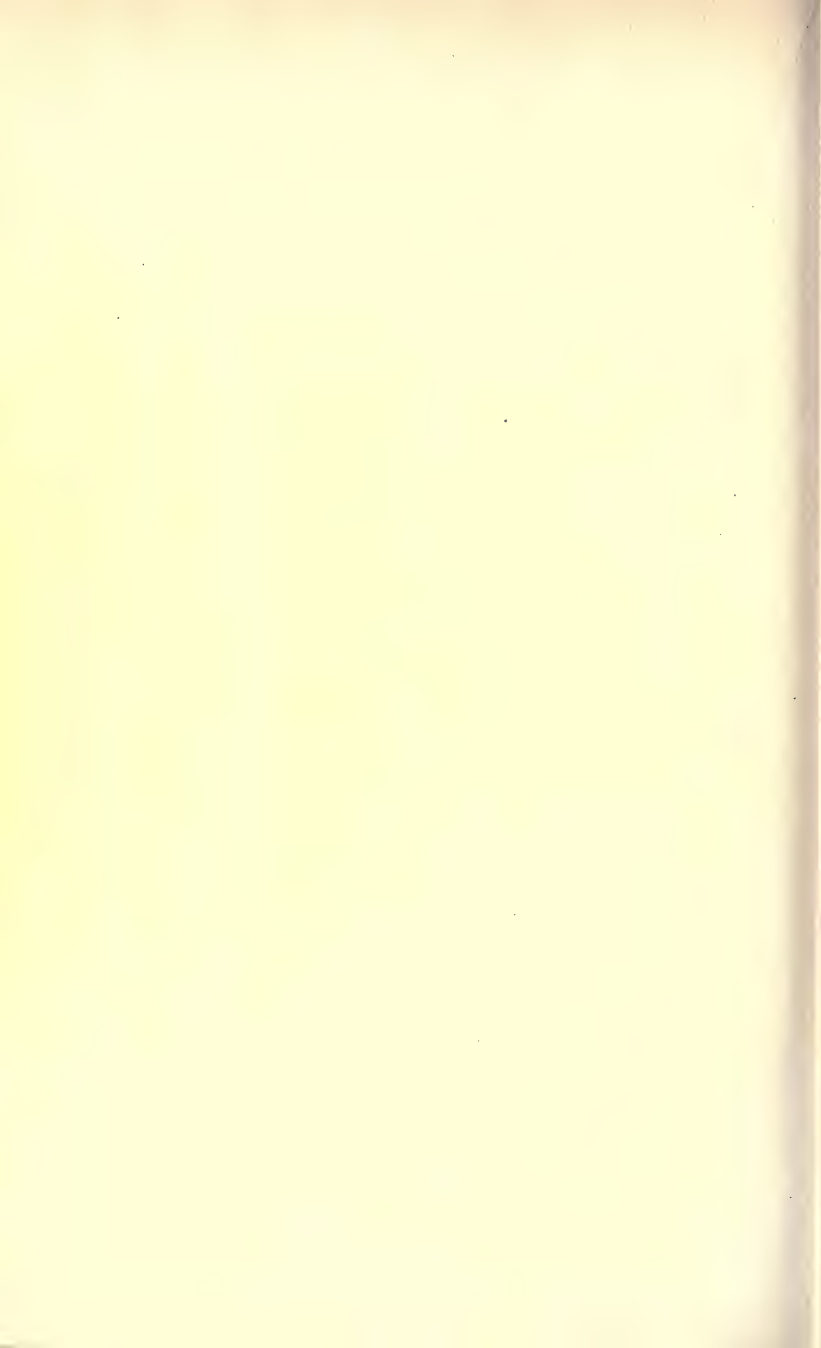


## MILLENNIUM

The future that our fathers planned,  
The dreams they knew in days of old,  
Fulfilled, are ashes; heart and hand  
Faithless, have served at altars cold;  
Lord God, with wider knowledge give  
The deeper grace by which we live.

A nobler purpose raise, O Lord,  
Within our hearts than quest of wealth,  
That we may build the realm where sword  
May never vex the peace and health  
Of those who keep the faith of old  
Nor bring Thee, Lord, a heart grown cold.

## OTHER POEMS



## HELEN OF TROY

**L**AUGHINGLY with the wind in her hair  
That brushed a gleaming breast laid bare,  
She came from the hills like the stainless snow  
Of Alpine summits which roseate grow  
In the flush of dawn; and her eyes were bright  
As the splendour of stars in a moonless night,  
Her twin feet sandalled and silver shod;  
Meet for the love of an amorous god  
She moved with the grace of a poet's line  
Winged with the lyre, the crystalline  
Air of the morn about her flowing,  
Laving the limbs superbly glowing,  
The amorous arms, and secret breast  
Lightly veiled from the lover lest  
He grow too faint with the beauty of her  
Who was white as a lily and sweet as myrrh.

She sang like a bird in an April dawn  
When the trembling verge of light new-born  
Gleams like gold on the grey world's edge;

## HELEN OF TROY

And the lark, whose high-flown privilege  
Was to sentinel day from his airy tower,  
Fell silent beneath a sweeter power  
Of song that descended like manna from heaven;  
And the shepherd forgot the charge he was given,  
The fisherman left his boat on the shore,  
The trader ran from his little store  
Where swords of silver, shields of gold,  
Tyrian robes and girdles were sold;  
And a youth sprang out of the shadowed sea  
Where he bathed, his body like ivory  
White and moulded, glistening yet  
In youth's cold purity, naked and wet.  
He ran to the shore like a child entranced,  
Aureoled in the light that glanced  
On the marble form, the length of limb,  
Breadth of shoulder and grace of him  
Whom men called Paris, Priam's son,  
Whose beauty the heart of Helen won.

And the loved of men, the world's desire,  
Spoiler of lands, and torch of fire  
Lighting the frenzied hearts of kings,  
Sang in the morn, and ran as with wings

## HELEN OF TROY

To him whose embrace and body chill  
Sent through her frame a breathless thrill;  
And the shepherd watched, the fisherman stood  
With passion that ran like fire in the blood,  
And the trader cried in a voice grown old —  
“What is the worth of silver and gold  
When the flesh is dry and the heart a stone?”  
Then the fisherman said — “I dwell alone  
On the homeless seas, and though nets are full  
Life without love is not beautiful.”  
But the shepherd turned to them both, and said —  
“I am young, and my father’s flocks are spread  
O’er many meadows, and all men know  
He cools his wine with Asian snow;  
Love in the city streets I bought,  
Yet the love I desire in vain is sought.”

She lay with his head on her tremulant breast,  
Her mouth on his hair, her limbs caressed  
By the ardent youth whose beautiful face  
Lay in the soft warm resting-place;  
But her heart was troubled, her soul knew  
shame —

“My life is consumed by a withering flame,

## HELEN OF TROY

With beauty accursed of the gods — this boy  
Lures me with love, to the doom of Troy."

While three made prayers to the adverse Fates  
She cursed the gift that desolates.



## THE MOON A LOVELY MAIDEN IS

**T**HE moon a lovely maiden is  
Who hides from me through all the day  
Enwrapped in cloudy mysteries  
That fall away  
At sunset when she kneels to pray;  
The moon a lovely maiden is.

The moon has sorrowful large eyes  
And her round face is pale with fright;  
What is the fear from which she flies  
With face so white?  
Her absence darkens the dark night;  
The moon has sorrowful large eyes.

A maiden who has never smiled  
The shy moon is, most beautiful,  
Most virtuous and undefiled,  
And dutiful —  
Yet pleasanter to kiss a skull;  
A maiden who has never smiled.

## THE MOON A LOVELY MAIDEN IS

Perhaps the moon no maiden is  
But one who goes with silent tread  
And gives a cold and solemn kiss  
To all the dead,  
And sleeps a while within each bed;  
Perhaps the moon no maiden is.

## TO MARJORY: IN SPRINGTIME

**L**ITTLE winsome Marjory,  
Clasp my hand and come with me  
Where the sunshine and the flowers  
All rejoice in Springtime-hours;  
Let us seek the meadow stream  
Lit with many a golden gleam,  
Where the ripples in the breeze,  
And the slender willow trees,  
Laugh and twinkle in the sun  
Like a maiden full of fun.  
Now the notched and silver palm  
Heavenward lifts its Easter psalm,  
And along the watercourse  
Flames the yellow-blossomed gorse,  
And the grass is soft and green  
Like a carpet for a queen —  
Little dancing Marjory,  
Clasp my hand and come with me.

Gaily from the hawthorn bush  
Comes the twitter of the thrush,

## TO MARJORY: IN SPRINGTIME

Fast and faster yet he sings  
As upon the bough he swings,  
For he has so much to say  
About the nest that's hid away  
Where you'll never find it, love!  
Now the lark has soared above,  
Dropping from his throat the pearls  
On a string that downward whirls  
Like a thousand fairy bells  
O'er the wooded hills and dells:  
Up he soars and higher still —  
Now his topmost note is shrill —  
Ah! he sinks — his song grows less —  
You wonder if it's dizziness?  
Little frolic Marjory,  
Shall we run to him and see?

Radiant is the joyous sun,  
For, you see, he's just begun  
Kissing all the little girls  
On their golden tumbling curls,  
And he smiles on little boys  
When they are so full of joys,  
Oh the sun — he likes the Spring,

## TO MARJORY: IN SPRINGTIME

Likes it more than anything!  
Now the bee is after honey,  
Sharp as misers after money,  
And he visits all the flowers  
In the bright and sunny hours.  
All day long the lilies look  
At their faces in the brook,  
And the daisies look around  
Golden-eyed upon the ground;  
Merry, elfin Marjory,  
Clasp my hand and come with me.

All the scented hedgerows gay  
Deck themselves in bridal may,  
And the roses are in bud,  
Each a tiny drop of blood;  
And a thousand fledgling-throats  
Try to learn their woodland notes,  
For how strange would seem the Spring  
If no birds had learned to sing!  
Let us go and in the grass  
Lie and watch the clouds that pass,  
Fairy ships all sailing through  
Strange and boundless seas of blue.

## TO MARJORY: IN SPRINGTIME

Let us go, it is such fun  
Idly dreaming in the sun!  
Laughing little Marjory,  
Will you, will you come with me?

## THE YOUTH OF BEAUTY

**A** YOUTH came down to the City, from over  
the Hills of Sleep,

He came like the star of morning that fronts the  
waking deep:

His cheeks were mantled with roses, his brow like  
ivory gleamed,

And his eyes were dark and lustrous, the eyes of  
one who dreamed.

He came to the gate of the City, and went thro'  
the streets of men,

Singing the Song of Beauty they never will hear  
again:

He moved in the crowded market where mer-  
chants sought for gold,

Where Love was purchased with riches, and Hon-  
our itself was sold.

Oh strange was the song of his singing, with pas-  
sion the strains o'erflowed

## THE YOUTH OF BEAUTY

Till his face was lit with glory, and his eyes were  
fires that glowed;  
The merchants, forgetting their bargains, went up  
to the place where he sang,  
And women, with children, came running at sound  
of the notes that rang

Like the full, fierce torrents of Springtide, filled  
with a mountain tone,  
Eager for sunlit meadows after the cold, high  
zone,  
Now like the blended music of myriad, birdlike  
notes  
Flooding the stream-girt valleys, from out a thou-  
sand throats.

Dreamily, dreamily, sweetly, now high, now low,  
now soft,  
The radiant youth was singing, and as he passed  
they oft  
Turned to the ground their faces, for in their eyes  
the tears  
Gathered and glistened, and falling, broke thro'  
the seal of years.



## THE YOUTH OF BEAUTY

The merchant heard in the singing the voice that  
was his when, a boy,

He stood by the knees of his mother in the far-off  
days of joy:

The children listened with wonder — a strange,  
sweet story this,

Filled with a sorrowful yearning; whence came  
this Youth whose bliss

Had stopped the hum of the market, had voiced  
the grief of years,

And made them think of something — sad to the  
point of tears? —

For a maiden ceased from kissing the lips of the  
youth she loved,

And the children's eyes grew rounder, and never  
a listener moved.

“Come with me out to the sunshine, follow me  
where I lead,

And leave behind in silence the woeful weight of  
greed;

Men of the City, your labour is useless for ye  
shall go,

Borne out on the breath of Winter, nor reap the  
things ye sow.

## THE YOUTH OF BEAUTY

“ Others shall follow after and reap your gift of  
tears

With moans and heavy sorrow, bearing the weight  
of years :

Come! for the things immortal are the things ye  
need not seek —

The dreams endure for ever, the facts of men are  
weak!

“ Who shall destroy the sunset, and who shall  
silence the lark?

O ye who toil for sorrow, O ye who work in the  
dark,

Scatter the gold of your minting and gather the  
gold of the sky,

For the things unmade of men are the things men  
cannot buy! ”

He sang, but some were scornful, the merchant  
turned away —

A sunset was a sunset, a thing of everyday,  
For dreams he had no leisure, and they had little  
to give,

For he must toil for a living — though he never  
had time to live.

## THE YOUTH OF BEAUTY

The maiden turned to her lover who drank the  
magic song,  
She raised her lips to kiss him, and proved that  
love was strong  
To shatter the thought of the morrow with bliss  
of the present hour;  
And they left the dreamer singing and sought a  
sheltered bower.

The mother called to her children; who knew what  
evil spell  
This song of peace and beauty placed on their  
ears? — ah, well —  
The beauty that never sickens, the rapture that  
never dies  
Is less than the lips of children with laughter and  
piteous sighs.

“Come with me over the mountains” — he sang  
to the dwindling throng —  
“For men are sad with toiling, and many are worn  
with wrong;  
I go in quest of Beauty, in search of things that are  
One with the noonday silence, one with the even-  
ing star.

## THE YOUTH OF BEAUTY

“ Follow me over the valley, there's death in the  
city-gloom,  
Your backs are bowed with labour, your brows are  
writ with doom,  
Oh there is Death in your laughter, and Sorrow  
within your eyes;  
Come where the light shall fail not, and silence  
makes ye wise! ”

The youth went on thro' the City and down the  
echoing street,  
His brow bedecked with roses, and sandal-shod  
his feet;  
The maidens gazing after beheld his radiant face  
Intense with the passion of Beauty, and lit with  
holy grace.

On thro' the gate of the City, he went towards the  
height  
That gathered about its summit the battlements of  
night:  
His song passed into the silence from whence it  
came to men —  
The passionate Song of Beauty they never will  
hear again.

## THE YOUTH OF BEAUTY

The gold of the earth they garner, the woes of toil  
are theirs,

Famine, Oppression and Sorrow come with the  
wearying years,

Dreams they are fain to purchase, for dreams and  
rest they weep —

But the Youth of Beauty returns not from over  
the Hills of Sleep.

## A DEAD POET

(James Elroy Flecker)

**W**EAVE for his brow the laurel wreath, he  
lies

For ever dumb, the lips that sang so well  
Are locked in silence 'neath the alien skies,  
And all the tales are told that he shall tell.

Ah, mourn a little, for his life was sweet,  
And silence is too solemn after song,  
He has gone hence ere men had time to greet  
One who but seldom sang nor tarried long.

So sweet and light his singing, scarcely heard,  
Only the silence touched our ears with sense  
Of something void, as when a fluting bird  
No more breaks on the valley's somnolence.

He has gone hence,— ah, whither! who shall say?  
Perchance he treads the trackless paths of Night,  
Long wearied in the Caravan of Day,  
Perchance he seeks the Gardens of Delight,

## A DEAD POET

And thro' dim-shaded valleys journeys on,  
A moon-led pilgrim seeking for the Thing  
Which dreamers spake of in the days long gone,  
And poets sang of in a Grecian Spring.

It may be he has found those mounts of snow  
All flushed with rose, those glades of endless sleep,  
And knows the truths which many sought to  
    know,  
And wonders now why men grow sick and weep,

Why some are sad, as he was sad in days  
When Beauty was too beautiful and frail,  
When a dear voice was sweet beyond all praise,  
Rising at night-time from a starlit vale.

O nevermore for him the sunset fades,  
Nor ocean lifts her waters to the moon,  
No more his feet shall wander in the glades,  
His soul with mystic rapture deep aswoon;

For him no caravans with sound of bells  
Move from the Syrian cities shadow-dim,  
Nor long-lashed maidens dream by palm-girt  
    wells,  
Their phantom-world is all unknown to him.

## A DEAD POET

He holds a wider converse with the stars,  
And roams unfettered through the jewelled night,  
His song flows in the wind 'mid nenuphars  
Swaying and rustling in the dawning light.

Weave for his brow the laurel, for his name  
What brighter memory than those sweet songs  
Sung in a too-brief life that knew not fame,  
Yet gave this wealth which now to Time belongs!



## ON VIVISECTION

**G**OD, the great artist, skilled in fashioning,  
Made Earth, then furnished it with every-  
thing

Of wordless beauty, flowers, and birds that sing,  
Bees, butterflies and dogs, and things that ran,  
And lastly, to crown all, created man,  
Then cried — "There is no other God who can  
Out-dream the beauty of my lordly plan!"

Then God grew wearied with the things He saw  
And shattered, with a mood, the perfect law,  
Fashioned the tearing fang, the bloody claw,  
The leprous things that leap and crawl and twist,  
And thought — "I am supreme in this, I wist,  
No pang is undevised, no horror missed."  
But man brought forth the Vivisectionist.

## ABSENCE

(To W. K.)

**T**HE heart, more faithful than the brain,  
In dear remembrance keeps the hours  
And minutes — each a golden grain  
We scattered, as the countless flowers

Fall to the scythe that ruthless ends  
The glory of the hidden seed:  
So Time the Reaper o'er us bends  
And reaps our moments, while hearts bleed.

We knew this end, we smiled, and thought —  
“The day is far, no vain regret  
Shall come between us now” — we sought  
To use the moments well, and yet

This hour now comes when I depart  
And from the eyes and voice I knew  
Find shelter for my lonely heart  
Wherein, afar, to think of you.

## ABSENCE

O friend, if somehow, on the wind  
Your voice came to me, and I turned  
To see your face, and found the kind  
Calm light of eyes for which I yearned,

Then would this pleasure in my lot  
Seem wholly good, and Time's decree  
Less harsh — like dreams that I forgot  
With morning light these days would be;

For here a thousand sounds and sights  
Bring joy in wonder of new days,  
A treasury of strange delights  
Surrounds me in these brighter ways

Until the pain of troubled years  
Falls from me like a pall of woe,  
And as the moon its aura wears,  
So now old sorrows round me flow

Taking a beauty from the light  
Of this new rising into realms  
Above those regions of the night  
Where doubt the strongest overwhelms.

## ABSENCE

Here, where the city by the sea  
Holds converse with the reflux tide,  
Come Noon and Night with majesty  
To robe her like an orient bride.

The sunsets blaze beyond the towers,  
As windows down a fane of prayer,  
And ceaseless through the changing hours  
Ships of all nations, seeking her,

Pour in her lap the spoils they bring  
From lands of palm and burning noon;  
They come in sunrise glimmering,  
Or wraith-like sail beneath the moon.

With darkness, on the city's crest  
The lights blaze like a diadem,  
And there upon her heaving breast  
Flashes and glides each lustrous gem,

Diamond and ruby, amethyst —  
The jewelled river, trembling, lies  
Rippled with light, in moonlight kissed;  
While ferry-boats, like dragon flies,

## ABSENCE

Hover from shore to distant shore  
That, seaward, stretch into the night  
Where the onrushing waters roar  
Towards the long, linked chains of light

Mirrored in the lagoons that wait  
Tidal re-union with the sea  
When the lone sands, immaculate,  
Re-conquered, set their currents free.

And oft the siren's wail is heard  
Borne inland like the cry of pain  
Of a lost soul, to darkness lured,  
That has no hope of light again.

The sound of wind and moving seas,  
The unknown, silent ships that pass,  
Symbols are these of mysteries  
Discerned but dimly in the glass

That mirrors life behind our sight,  
Contracting to the eyes' domain  
The reaches of a vaster night,  
Unmeasured worlds that still remain.

## ABSENCE

O friend, there is a time when speech  
Is frozen with the breath of awe,  
When all the little truths we preach  
Seem fragments of a vaster law,

And in these days of lengthened view  
How I have longed that you were here,  
To walk with me, debate, construe,  
And differ — as in days that were.

LIVERPOOL, 1916.

## THE COURTESAN

**C**RUEL and fair and mutable as love,  
Wide waters rise and call along their shores  
To dreamers with the sunset in their eyes  
Which ever seek the land beyond, the star  
With light serene above the farthest wave;  
And yet, O sea, so old and still so young,  
Whose bosom rises with eternal breath,  
Whose breasts shall wither not with age, nor lose  
Their savour to the lips of men, thou art  
A snare for the uneasy hearts that seek  
A wilderness, trackless and wonderful.

And if such wonders lie upon thy breast,  
If thy cold mouth entices, and ensnares  
With bloodless kisses, and thy rapture holds  
The fealty of men from age to age,  
What purpose hath thy gift, for whom the wealth  
And splendour hoarded from the light of day  
In rayless caverns where green waters flow  
And pass with noiseless motion? Are there eyes

## THE COURTESAN

Thy witchery hath not charmed, or alien lips  
That have not made surrender on thine own,  
Or limbs that have not pressed thy sinuous  
    grace —

A proud and noble lover who has laughed  
With kingly scorn upon a courtesan?  
For one day, it would seem, thou wilt disrobe,  
Put off the shimmering mantle that enfolds  
Thy cold, translucent body, and reveal  
Thy fortune and thy splendour till the eyes  
Of that proud lover will disdain no more  
The heiress of the world's great treasury;  
And locked in his embrace in peace at last  
Thou wilt not moan upon the shore, nor sob  
In the night wind, nor murmur in the sun  
But sleep forever in an ageless peace.



## BALLAD OF ADMIRAL BLAKE

(For Joseph Conrad)

WHEN Admiral Blake sailed out to sea  
His ships of the line were five,  
And his flag was waving high and free  
As he ploughed the crested main:  
The cannon roared, the war-drums rolled,  
For Devon lads were strong and bold,  
And it was good to be alive,  
Oh very good to be alive  
And singe the beard of Spain!

The bosun's pipe called loud and clear,  
The sails were bellying out,  
And the Admiral sniffed the morning air  
As they sailed on the starboard tack;  
The headland faded dim and grey  
In the mist of morn as they sailed away,  
But they heard the distant shout,  
The landsmen's farewell shout,  
And a cheer went ringing back.

## BALLAD OF ADMIRAL BLAKE

Three days and nights they took the breeze  
Till the land was out of sight;  
Like birds of prey they roamed the seas  
But the Spaniards all were shy,  
Till the fifth day came, and with morning rose  
Sixteen ships on the weather-bows —  
“Spaniards? shall we fly or fight?  
Spaniards? then we'll have to fight!”  
And the Devon lads cried “Ay!”

They drew in line till the Spaniards loomed,  
Towering sail on sail.  
Cried Admiral Blake — “Those ships are  
doomed,  
So clear the deck for the fray!  
Sixteen to five! — 'tis a hot day's work,  
But I've not a lad that'll want to shirk,  
So give 'em a cheery hail!”  
They gave 'em a cheery hail  
And the cannon roared away.

From morn to noon and noon to night  
They hammered the Spaniards' sides,  
But the pompous galleons took to flight  
As darkness fell on them all;

## BALLAD OF ADMIRAL BLAKE

“ We'll follow them home,” cried Admiral Blake,

“ And send them a shot when it's time to wake!

They're very useful guides,

Oh, very useful guides,

And where they roost — we'll call! ”

When daylight glimmered they saw the prey,

Fear gave them speed enough,

Flying for home that loomed up grey.

“ We'll follow on — keep in close,

That's their port; more sail on the mast!

We've tracked the foe to his lair at last!

We'll tweak the Spaniards' nose,

We'll pull the Spaniards' nose

And by God! we'll give it snuff! ”

All through the morn they followed straight,

The Spaniards laughed to see

The simple English swallow the bait

And follow them into port;

For in Santa Cruz the cannon lay

To left and right of the harbour bay —

Oh the Spaniards laughed in glee,

While the Admiral cried in glee —

“ Such a fight we have never yet fought! ”

## BALLAD OF ADMIRAL BLAKE

Five small ships and a thousand men,  
A hundred cannon or so,  
Oh many would never see home again  
But never a man knew fear!  
And the cliffs loomed up to left and right  
And they ran right into the heart of the fight,  
And hailed the waiting foe,  
The crafty, waiting foe,  
With a rousing Devon cheer!

Then fire belched from the hills around,  
The galleons ringed them in,  
But Admiral Blake ran two aground  
And felled the mast of the third;  
Two more drew in and the cannon roared;  
“Run her down, and get aboard!”  
The Admiral cried above the din,  
They heard his voice above the din  
And they took him at his word!

All through the noon in the battle smoke  
They waged a desperate fight,  
Above and around the thunder broke,  
Ship after ship withdrew;  
For some were maimed and some were afire,

## BALLAD OF ADMIRAL BLAKE

And the rest had lost their keen desire,  
    And they fought each other in fright,  
    Destroyed each other in fright,  
And the fear and panic grew!

And the British ship like a wolf at bay  
    Snarled at the frightened foe;  
Ten treasure ships at the bottom lay,  
    Two of the rest were burnt;  
Then Admiral Blake sailed out to sea  
Battered and shattered, victorious, free!  
    For the Spaniards let them go,  
    They had to let them go!  
For their lesson had been well learnt!

Admiral Blake sailed over the foam  
    Wearied and wounded sore,  
“Speed for England and get me home —  
    Home to my native ground!”  
And Plymouth watched for him; long the crowd  
    Cheered when the ship lay off like a cloud,  
    And the Admiral heard the roar,  
    Smiled as he heard the roar,  
Then died as he reached the Sound.

## THE GREAT SHIPS

(For John Masefield)

**I** WONDER if the great ships  
Are coming o'er the bar  
With the West Wind in their rigging,  
From unseen lands afar,  
And if they slowly sail on  
The rayless waters flowing  
By the gates of a city I love well,  
And where I would be going.

For I am as the great ships  
And on the tide of life  
Go forth to unknown places  
And ne'er find rest but strife,  
And in a human ocean  
'Mid isles of brick and stone,  
Past ports and lands I know not,  
I sail through seas unknown.

I wonder if the great ships  
Are crowding into port,

## THE GREAT SHIPS

With mournful sirens wailing  
As though from sea they brought  
The terror of their conflict  
Which holds them as they creep  
From highways of the ocean  
And wonders of the deep.

For I am as the great ships,  
And sailing in a sea  
Where chartless souls are moving  
On human tides — to me  
Comes thought of lands of twilight  
And ports of rest where lie  
The weary ships unchartered,  
Beneath an evening sky.

I wonder if the great ships  
Creep up at break of dawn,  
The seagulls round their rigging,  
Grey-winged, with cries forlorn;  
Those ships and birds sail ever  
Through dreams of mine that are  
Of lone sands in the twilight  
And the sunset o'er the bar.

LONDON, May, 1917.



## THE HOUSE ON A HILL

**A** LITTLE house on a windy hill  
And, beyond, a starry sky,  
Sleeping fields in the moonlight chill  
And the keen wind raging high;  
But secure, within, a home of peace  
Warm and locked from the night,  
Music and generous talk and ease  
In the soft, dim candle-light.

Fleeting hours not touched with fame,  
Nor the splendour of dreams come true,  
And yet how a little joy will shame  
The triumphs the world can view!  
Without, the wind rose high and shrill,  
Within, secure, and warm,  
In a little heaven high on a hill  
What cared we for the storm?

For a golden voice with the 'cello rose,  
Two hands touched ivory keys,



## THE HOUSE ON A HILL

And our hearts were lulled to soft repose  
With love-lorn melodies;  
And the lonely wind like a spirit went  
Wailing along the night,  
Heard in the pause when the music, spent,  
Died in a faint delight.

Ah! the laurels of years and the triumphs of  
    years  
Shall fade, but the little things  
Will all come back with a grace of tears  
On soft, inaudible wings,  
And the wind shall wail o'er a phantom hill,  
The music come to an end,  
And one will mourn the voice grown still,  
The eyes of a vanished friend.

## THE VALLEY

A ROAD winds through the valley in a land  
I know afar,  
And the hills rise up before it, robed in purple  
haze,  
It is a road through twilight that seeks the even-  
ing star,  
A road that I would journey as in remembered  
days.

The hills shut out the sunset, and golden are their  
brows,  
And it is warm in the valley that slumbers at their  
feet,  
When through the misty meadows they drive the  
lowing cows,  
And the voices of the daytime die down the empty  
street.

The silence, like a curtain, falls on the sleeping  
hills,

## THE VALLEY

Only the owl is wakeful, and the wind that wanders on;

And I can feel the silence, and my heart in exile fills

With yearning for the homeland, the days for ever gone.

A road winds through the valley, it shines beneath the moon,

The hills rise black before it, the stars are bright above;

Oh, I would die tomorrow to gain my heart's one boon —

This night to see in moonlight the valley that I love!

## EXILE

(For Philip Gibbs)

**L**ONG days, long days that never seem to end,  
Why do you tarry so, is not my heart  
Beating against the bars that will not bend  
And let me fly to those dear friends afar?  
For here the days grow changeless, and apart  
From those I love, for whom my voice grows  
    kind,  
I walk in solitude grown eloquent.

There is a grove where every kindly star  
Glow bright when shadows lengthen, and the  
    days  
Go westward, and the woodland pathways wind  
To little dells that surely know my face,  
For I was young with them and knew their joys,  
How Spring dwelt in them, flushed with loveliness,  
Till winter followed, and their beauty went.  
Oh, are you lovely still for other boys  
And do they dream as I did long ago,

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## EXILE

And strip and let the water's soft caress  
Fall on their bodies, white and all agleam,  
Then lie upon the grass and dream and dream  
The mighty things which only youth can know?

Here by the seashore breaks the cruel sea  
Loud in the midnight baring its white lip,  
Here, while the darkness broods and covers me,  
I am grown wise with that fine scholarship  
Which absence fosters and the heart makes dear.  
What lies beyond the darkness, on the face  
Of those black waters restless 'neath the moon —  
A wondrous daybreak, white and fresh and clear?  
Is darkness always lost in light somewhere,  
And Sorrow made to flee the morning's grace?  
O Dawn, I cry to thee "Come soon — come  
soon!"

There is a day that comes however long  
The darkness broods upon the calling soul,  
Which I shall know, and down familiar ways  
Run laughing where a thousand whispers throng  
And things are glad once more to see my face.  
Oh, I will run from darkness, fill the whole  
Glad morning with a noise of wildest laughter

## EXILE

And clasp familiar hands in many a place  
I never ceased to love, and look in eyes  
That are not strange or cold; and there shall be  
Great music at the heart of things, and after  
Shall follow silence, cherished by the wise;  
For I shall sit and call each memory  
To show its faithfulness, and dream again  
How I went forth from home and cherished  
    friends  
To learn in solitude and distant pain  
How happy is the day when exile ends!

## HABBERLEY VALLEY REVISITED

**D**OWN to Habberley Valley I went at break  
of day,  
The glory of the morning sun lit up the golden  
way,  
And all the hills and valleys, the paths and hidden  
dells  
Called with myriad voices, entranced with myriad  
spells.

Ah, verdant valley dreaming in the light of this  
old sun,  
How many days have fled away, how much is left  
undone  
Since last I walked your mossy ways, and lay  
among the heather  
When Love and Youth together dreamed in  
Summer's royal weather.

Something of the old rapture for evermore has  
fled,

## HABBERLEY VALLEY REVISITED

Some of the dreams have vanished, some of the  
hopes are dead,  
And the heart has lost a little of the simple joy of  
life,  
With the dearest visions shattered in the ever-  
lasting strife.

*Days of old  
Like the gold*

*Bright at morn on a mountain rim,  
Now on the peak of a glaring noon  
How I long for your valleys dim!  
Shadows of Love and Youth and Laughter  
Flee in the noon that follows after!*

Down to Habberley Valley I took the winding  
way  
Where the pine trees rustle softly and the silver  
birches sway,  
And as I trod the purple paths a thousand  
thoughts upstarted  
Tinged with regret for ancient days when life was  
single-hearted.



## HABBERLEY VALLEY REVISITED

Ah still the voices called me and the woodland  
    echoes rang,  
From every wrinkled trunk and bole the elfin  
    voices sprang,  
“ Oh thou hast been unfaithful — thou art come  
    to us again,  
Let Mother Earth absolve thee with her tears of  
    silver rain !

“ Here in the happy valley, morning, noon and  
    night  
The silence of the woodland shall bring thy soul  
    delight,  
The dawn shall break in beauty where the hills in  
    splendour lie,  
Oh come again, oh come again to the joys that  
    never die ! ”

*Days of old  
Like the gold*

*Bright at morn on a mountain rim,  
Now in the weariness of day  
How I long for your valleys dim!  
Shadows of Youth and Love and Laughter  
Flee in the noon that follows after!*

## HABBERLEY VALLEY REVISITED

Down to Habberley Valley, as though a ghostly  
hand

Had led me back across the years into the shadow-  
land,

I trod in waking wonder, and my joy returned  
anew,

For the heart was hushed with silence, and the  
sweetness thrilled me through!

“ Oh come again to me and lay thy heart upon my  
breast,

I am the great Earth-Mother, in my bosom there  
is rest

For the weariest of mortals, when the world hath  
left thee broken

I shall fold thee in my silence, in the calm of Love  
unspoken!

In the silver of the dawn and in the gold when  
twilight's falling,

In the hush of adoration there's a voice that's  
calling, calling —

And a whisper seems to blow across the valley,  
and the sound

As of fairies dancing lightly sweeps along the  
dewey ground.”

## HABBERLEY VALLEY REVISITED

*Days of old  
Like the gold*

*Bright at morn on a mountain rim,  
Now the ancient joy returns  
As I tread in the valleys dim;  
Shadows of Youth and Love and Laughter  
Beckon me and I follow after!*

Down to Habberley Valley I went at break of  
day  
And wandered where the gorse in flame lights up  
a golden way,  
And where the stately pine trees shed their  
needles, sweet and brown,  
Laved in the lustral light of dawn in peace I laid  
me down.

The branches waved above me, and the wind ran  
through the grass,  
I heard strange voices in the wood, steps that did  
come and pass —  
And the glad sun kissed my body, and warmly  
smiled on me —  
While heaven glowed in splendour — blue to in-  
finity!

## HABBERLEY VALLEY REVISITED

Oh here was rest and silence after the arid ways  
That through the wide world's wilderness lead on  
for endless days;  
Splendour of sun and silence, beauty of valley and  
glade,  
Here peace stole in upon me beneath the pine  
trees' shade.

*Days of old  
Like the gold  
Bright at morn on a mountain rim,  
Once again my heart is young  
As I dwell in the valleys dim;  
What if Youth flies — Love and Laughter  
These remain and follow after!*

## A GARDEN AT RYDAL

NOW wanes the splendour of the mountain  
rim,

The purple shadows in the hilly fold  
Darken, and every lustrous peak grows dim,  
The mists creep in the valley, white and cold,  
The birds have chanted their last requiem  
And westward all the hills are dark and bold.

Here in the garden not a leaf is stirred,  
The happy laughter of the sunny moon  
Is stilled, the busy noise of bee and bird  
Comes not again, but Night brings her soft  
boon —

For louder through the quiet now is heard  
The streamlet silvered with the rising moon,  
And like old thoughts of noonday happiness  
The perfume of the roses floods the air,  
And the night breezes with a light caress  
Fall on my brow and wander through my hair;  
Silence and Night, these influences bless  
Our souls with rapt communion deep and rare.

## A GARDEN AT RYDAL

Here in this garden dwell abiding things,  
The everlasting beauty of the earth,  
The lyric rapture of the bird that sings,  
The magic of the dawn, the simple mirth  
Of little insect lives, the peace that clings  
To solitude, the wealth of common worth;

Abiding things that seem to mock at Fame,  
That vanity which we too oft adore,  
Forgetting how true greatness of a name  
Lies in its worth to those, however poor,  
Who tread the silent way, untouched with blame,  
Serving great ends, illustriously obscure.

Now in the silence comes a space for thought,  
A time to think, a quiet for the mind  
To brood in, and great influences wrought  
From the enduring moods of Nature find  
Their healing mission in the mind that fought  
For a dim end, despairingly and blind.

But here the fever of our life is cooled,  
Passionless as the starlit night that fills  
The sleeping valley, all my thoughts are schooled

## A GARDEN AT RYDAL

To a great calmness by the sleeping hills;  
Now is my life my own, nor overruled  
By wild unrest that breeds a thousand ills;

For silence is the wise man's true domain,  
And Nature the great book whose wisdom leads  
Through tranquil days wherein choice spirits gain  
The wealth of true content, and whoso reads  
The language spoken by the wind and rain  
Knows the one Truth behind the many creeds.

What profit to the soul if we with dreams  
Would shape the world more to our heart's desire,

And following the transitory gleams  
Lose native wealth and fall, in quest of higher?  
Here in this garden 'mid the hill and streams  
Silence has truths none other can inspire.

The bright star burning on the mountain crest  
Seen in its steady splendour through the vale  
Has no diviner purpose than the quest  
Burning within my heart, and if I fail  
Then better will arise until the best  
Comes in that Dawn when all our stars grow pale.



## A GARDEN AT RYDAL

The quest! — the consummation every one  
Seeks for the dream he dreams, grows surer here,  
For ardent spirits wearied with the sun  
Grow tranquil in this peace that everywhere  
Falls with the eventide; what we have done,  
Or what remains, loses its weight of care.

The great hills sleeping in the lunar light,  
The dark sky mirrored in the mere, the call  
From the lone owl that fills the solemn night,  
The cricket in the meadow, and the tall  
Trees in the valley, stir with sound and sight  
A newer sense that wakes amid them all,

That wakes, until the silence as with wings  
Lifts me above the valley, and I know  
A purpose vast with promise, love that sings  
Under life's current, mighty thoughts that flow  
Familiar as remembered music — things  
That find their birth in silence, come and go.



## A BOY'S LAUGHTER

**P**ROSTRATE before the Sun's high, flaming  
throne

The Earth lay molten in a thousand hues

That, like a rainbow's arch, diffuse

Their lights of myriad tone

Over a quivering zone

Fearfully reaching towards the setting Sun.

High o'er the woodland, far beyond the hill,

Lost in the purpled haze

Mantling the sun-flushed ways,

The cerulean wind-swept sky

Scattered her rosy flocks, and triumphing

Flung far their bannered beauty to the East

Where lo! the rising Moon, so wan and chill,

Ghostly and frail as one about to die,

Wrapped round with mists of the dissolving  
earth,

Rode on the flood of Night,

Enrobed in lunar light,

Ere died the glories of the sun-god's feast

## A BOY'S LAUGHTER

Or stilled to silence was his flaming mirth,  
For he had died as daily he must die —  
Gloriously, on his blood-encrimsoned bed,  
Where he, soul-centred, smileth on their play,  
And smiling, giveth Day.

Far on the westering course the pilgrim Sun  
Journeyed along the flame-fed track of light,  
Leaving to Earth the last bequest of Night:  
And from a mist-wreathed blackthorn bush that  
shed

Its sere, sad topmost leaf, the last lone one,  
A blackbird, yellow-billed,  
With husky voice outcalled,  
And all the silence filled,

Then ceased and shivered, at the sound ap-  
palled.

But in the leafless garden where the rose  
Once reared her vaunted beauty to the  
noon,

Holding within her fragrant folds the  
tears

Shed through the silent watches of the  
Moon

## A BOY'S LAUGHTER

By one, who, dreamlike, walked in Love's  
    dire throes  
And passion-fretted fears,  
    (Loosing her tresses in the scented  
        wind,  
Mourning that hearts grow cold, and Love grows  
    blind)  
Now, in the garden where the rose's  
    bloom  
Lay in a wintry tomb,  
Where no voice mourned the love for ever lost,  
    Sharing the rose's doom,—

A limpid voice its lucid notes uptossed,  
Winsome and tremulous as a fairy thought  
    Builded on naught:  
With music free, unthinking and unsought,  
    Upwelling from the fountain of the soul —  
    A boy's light laugh  
Came bright as bubbled, mirth-provoking wine  
    That gods divine  
    Upon Olympus quaff;  
But unto me, the voice of that glad boy  
Brought echoing pain beneath the sound of joy,

## A BOY'S LAUGHTER

For I, alas, a singer, see the whole,  
The end that makes a shadow of all mirth  
    Upon this changeful earth,  
And I had wished to keep that merry voice  
    Wherein my thoughts rejoice,  
But Life, alas, moves onwards with the Sun,  
    And day is never done  
    Until the creeping night  
Gathers the quivering limbs unto her breast,  
    And stills the heart to rest  
    With soothing sleep.

O happy voice of Youth, ring out! for now  
    The springflood surges thro' the singing frame,  
    And for the undimmed sight  
The virgin Earth hath donned her bridal gown,  
    Flower-flecked in green and brown;  
    And thou mayst kiss her brow  
With boyish adoration chaste and deep,  
    Calling her many a name  
    Sweet as her flower-strewn breast  
That to her wearied children giveth eternal  
    rest.  
    Dream not of future years

## A BOY'S LAUGHTER

For they are filled with tears,  
But take the present good;  
The passionless love, the endless dream, the flow-  
ers of purity  
Now in the garden of thy heart upspring,  
Unheeding dim far-off Futurity  
Whose wintry flood  
Bears down 'twixt cheerless shores where no birds  
sing,  
Youth's blossoms, withering.

Within the garden, though the Winter drear  
Has placed its palsied touch upon each leaf,  
There is no fear,  
There is no grief  
While music such as thine  
Startles the blackbird on the barren bough:  
Oh Summer is not dead for evermore,  
Though sounds no music in the frosty air,  
As oft of yore,  
When softest flutings to the Moon did vow  
A heart's unchanging love for one so fair:  
Oh list! the lucid laughter rings again  
And from the bird all pain  
Of wintry desolation fades away —

## A BOY'S LAUGHTER

Surely a Springtime madrigal he heard,  
Those were the flutes of Spring!  
Echoing! Echoing!  
Whereat the bird  
Breaks through the silence of his own dismay,  
And in the barren garden once more sings.

O Joy, whose magic wings  
Soar up in music unto Hope and Love,  
Within this boy's heart move  
That he with tremulant music of his voice  
May call this saddened garden to rejoice,  
Teaching the sorrowing bird forgotten song,  
For while this swift, spontaneous laughter runs  
Like magic fire along our wintry veins  
The sorrowful heart grows youthful, glad and  
strong,  
And all the wearying weight of life sustains!

O Desolation, powerless to break  
The music of young life,  
Thou spirit of Destruction, shall we mourn  
While such light joy finds utterance, and is borne  
Across the flowerless garden? Nay! I take

## A BOY'S LAUGHTER

This music of a boyish heart of mine,  
And through the echoing chambers of my soul  
Its harmony divine

Memorably shall roll:

And if the burden of dead beauty weighs  
Too heavily upon me in the days

When Summer's glory threatens to depart,  
Then shall a boy's light laughter from a day  
Long passed away,

Come back and whisper softly unto me;

Then I shall hear, and I shall understand,  
Loving the garden's grief, as loves the land  
The midnight moaning of the Moon-drawn sea.



## TO PETER

PETER, when I hear you sing  
And your merry laughter ring  
Then I know to be alive  
Is very good when you are five.  
If you had the power to give  
Something of that life you live —  
Oh, so distant, now, from me —  
I might laugh with you and be  
Happy as the day is long,  
Sing, like you, a merry song.

Peter, when I hear you speak  
To your father, all I seek,  
Like a bubble blown from soap,  
Bursts and leaves me little hope,  
For to him the words you say  
Mean so much, and I, one day  
Long ago, talked so to one  
Who would now scarce know his son;  
Yet perhaps some words I said



## TO PETER

Are remembered by the dead.  
Would go too — he could not find  
Another boy of just your kind;  
And remember, Peter, you  
Would ne'er find such a father, too!

## TO RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

(Inscription on a Book of Verse)

**A**S a page unto his knight  
Sings to give his lord delight  
'Tis so I bring these songs to you,  
Fain to fall beneath your sight  
E'en though they tell of nothing new;

For, a poet, you will know,  
Rarest roses often grow  
Upon the tree mature with years,  
And the sweetest songs that flow  
Are those that tell of ancient tears.

↓ Beauty is the smile of Truth:  
You have plucked the rose of Youth,  
Have strewn its petals one by one,  
You have laughed and loved with ruth —  
Yet beauty lives though youth is done;

TO RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

And from the immortal tree  
Of Beauty that eternally  
    Strews flowers in the path of Time,  
I have plucked — O take from me,  
    Love's laureate — this rose of rhyme.

## TO A CLIMBER

**H**AVE you a doubt? — then settle it, and  
say —

“ I have resolved henceforward from today — ”

Have you a fear? — crush it, or it will rise,  
Face the whole world with courage in your eyes,  
No man can win whose heart invites defeat.

Govern yourself — the whole world at your feet  
Lies, quick to serve the man who knows his mind;  
But in your strength be not too strong or blind  
To the sure Fate that watches o’er the weak.

Fear not the voice of many — ever seek  
Reason in calmness, for the greatest fall  
Listening to counsel that was urged too well;  
Keep to your word, and honour Friendship’s  
claim —

There is no ruin like an inward shame.

Know in the hour that you decide to fight  
There is no ally half so strong as Right,  
And be not weak to battle with the strong  
If, in your heart, you know their cause is wrong.

## TO A CLIMBER

Honour your foe, and never learn to hate  
Lest come a time that you will perpetrate  
Acts that portray the fury of the fool.  
Fear not to forgive; love, and be not too cool,  
For only little minds have little passions;  
Scorn not the failure — knowing how Life fash-  
ions

Strength out of weakness which has found its end.  
Live in the sun, laugh like a boy, and spend  
Yourself for others — selfishness is crime  
Against the law of life and Love sublime,  
And lastly, in success be not too proud —  
For all your glory ends but in a shroud.

## TO NOBLE WOMEN

DEAR women, sweet and noble-hearted  
Spirits sojourning on earth,  
Where love and grief are never parted,  
What bright influence gives you birth?

In that heaven made of dreams  
Which the heart of man desires  
Were you born of rainbow gleams  
That God's smile on tears inspires?

For you span the darkest sorrow,  
Build your nature from the storm  
With the sunshine that you borrow,  
Moulded to prophetic form.

Dear noble women whose compassion  
Makes us children at your knees,  
Is it from our griefs you fashion  
Your bright faith which brings such ease?

## TO A YOUNG POET

Who Deplored the Passing of Youth

**Y**OU sighed and looked into the glass,  
And seeing yourself — “ I soon will pass  
With all my petty triumphs ” — you said —  
“ I shall grow old, fall sick, be dead.”  
And then you sighed again, and I,  
Laughing unkindly, made reply —  
“ Perhaps ’tis well you know it now  
While not a furrow marks your brow,  
While Youth’s red wine is sipped by you  
And all is fresh and good and true;  
Your face has yet its boyhood’s bloom,  
Your laughter holds no hint of doom,  
Your lithe young body, graceful, strong,  
Is beautiful as a line of song;  
Vigorous, clean, and quick, you find  
Life is a joy but half defined,  
And every act and every way  
Brings a new glory to your day.  
Some sorrow you have known, for which

## TO A YOUNG POET

Your joy is something doubly rich,  
And friendships' hours have proved to you  
That flesh and blood are things more true,  
More precious than the songs you sing,  
For to your eyes they sometimes bring  
A great and summer-smitten calm  
That to the aching heart is balm.

“ And even yet light laughter lies  
Slumbering in your magic eyes,  
Eyes with a deep, soft, liquid light  
Like the deep moonlit pools of night,  
Though sometimes when your thought takes fire  
Those eyes seem all a wild desire  
Burning with bright intensity  
Out of the soul's immensity.

“ Sunshine you catch within your smile  
And hold its radiance for a while,  
But fitful as an April day  
You change, grow silent, draw away;  
A poet, subtle as your songs,  
A magic to your speech belongs  
For you can play on human chords  
With all the passion youth affords,



## TO A YOUNG POET

Until your thoughts move quick and bright  
As summer lightning in the night.

A flower,— a rose, a buttercup —

Your eyes will drink its beauty up;

A face, a song, that seems divine,

You mould it in a rhythmic line:

You burn with zeal to lock the rose

Within a tomb of fragrant prose,

A dream of beauty are the stars

Glimmering through the deodars;

At midnight on the wooded hill

Voices you hear, though all is still, 54

And in the ecstasy of Youth

You vow with Keats that Beauty's Truth. 6 *to*

“ And yet, young friend, the old are wise,

Regard a while the change that lies

Along the pathway of the years

That you must traverse — sighs and tears,

The end of youth's fine healthy glow,

The zeal with which you overflow.

Gone is the glory of your face,

With it your body's fawn-like grace,

Ah, more — the thread of lively thought

That held your friends and made you sought

## TO A YOUNG POET

And led you to a throne of glory,  
Breaks now your head is aged and hoary;  
Your listeners all are crept away,  
Many to sleep, a few to pray —  
Silent the audience chamber now  
Where sits Old Age with wrinkled brow.

“ Young friend,” I said, “ fear not the glass,  
For never joys will come to pass  
When all the witty things are said  
And fever in the blood is dead;  
A perfect calm, the heart at ease  
Wearied no more with need to please,  
The genial gentleness that sheds  
A benign grace on silvery heads,  
The ripened thought, the sweetened soul  
That has all life in its control,  
That lauds the aim, and not the end,  
Knowing how failure may befriend,  
The eyes that see the border line,  
The hand that feels a grasp divine,  
The twilight calm, and the last sleep  
That like a tide runs to the deep —  
Young friend,” I said, “ all’s well! these things  
Are Life’s best gifts which old age brings.”

## THE PORTRAIT

**T**HERE is a gift, friend, in your hand; here's  
proof

That just so many eyes that gaze will see,  
Though never one finds what the other finds  
Or reads into the face portrayed the same  
Interpretation; Daniel's mystic wall  
Had troubled less these readers of the soul  
Who mount your stairs, tap on your studio door  
And taking chair, are seated leg o'er leg,  
Lean back, and with the zest of ignorance  
Pronounce the verdict, praise you, Raphael-like,  
Or, with a deference masking self-conceit,  
Drawl out their smug suggestions — "on the  
cheek

Is not the shadow — well — perhaps not; — but  
Yet 'tis a layman's fancy! — still . . . per-  
haps . . ."

And so they leave you striving with faint doubts  
When all had seemed so clear and true; and now  
You hesitate, when, "Rap!" — the studio door

## THE PORTRAIT

Opens to show your second visitor  
Who, greeting given, straightway takes his stand  
Fronting the easel, silent; on the roof  
The rain falls musically where the glass  
Is washed of grime from office chimney-pots  
Guarding your seven-story studio,  
And now the second verdict. "Yes . . . the  
face

Is perfect, wonderfully true — but is  
The brow so broad — yes? Somehow . . .  
well of course,

The artist, *he* should know indeed" — then goes  
The second critic down the stairs, and you  
Begin to doubt your gift when — "Rap!" — the  
third!

Oh! but you are a man of Christian spirit!  
Suffering the fool so gladly that he thinks  
His thin, diluted wisdom warms your soul  
And helps you to that effort which shall raise  
Your name and fee beyond provincial cavil;  
And the third critic, smoking your cigarette,  
Makes judgment with the spice of wit, dilates  
Upon the happy touches, those sure tricks  
Which make the portrait lifelike, and you smile

## THE PORTRAIT

To hear your genius classed with conjuring —  
Dexterity of hand combined, with eye.  
Then down goes critic three, while you remain  
To clean your brushes, thinking all the time  
That Art is but a jade — to flirt with, yes.  
But marry — if you dare!

Meanwhile, I pray,  
Allow me audience — the portrait's source,  
The flesh and blood,— of me what thought your  
critics?

Am I not wronged, or is the Samson-sight  
Too blind to note the Philistine in me!  
Take critic one, and learn his view; he comes,  
For all his twelve stone, blithely up the steps,  
Flushed with good health, a man of easy life  
Who finds his natural appetites appeased  
As soon as thought gives action to desire.  
He laughs, is never melancholy, lives  
As though the world were ordered to his taste,  
With flat in town, a maisonnette in Paris,  
Bungalow on the river, and a place  
Girt with ancestral towers, 'mid a park  
Noisy with rooks; and so he lives his life,  
Through days of free disposal. Labour, want,

## THE PORTRAIT

Disease, despair,— such things exist, he knows,  
But are as discord in a distant room,  
Walled up, too far removed to be disturbing;  
And as his life, so his philosophy,  
And as this latter, so his view-point too  
When judging this our portrait; hear his words —

“ An interesting-looking face, some day  
Bring him to tea, but why so sad, no youth  
Should look so miserable, though these poets  
Find pleasure in their pain. They say his books,  
Which I have never read, show deepest thought —

Somehow I never could read poetry

Or I would borrow them and read myself —

Surely he looks more cheerful in real life

Or is it just a trick you artists have

To hint at sorrow in the eyes, to lend

A wistful spirit to the face? I heard

My cousin speak of him the other day,

He swore he never met so gay a wit,

Such sparkling high vivacity before,

And he has travelled much, knows Paris well,

Which is the home of talkers, but this boy

Impressed him, evidently poor, he thought

Had travelled little, longed for Italy —



## THE PORTRAIT

Singular that, you know, I lived there once  
For quite three years — a hot and weary place  
Where galleries innumerable hold  
Insidious faces by 'Fra this,' 'Fra that' . . .  
A glorified museum with broken limbs,  
Chipped torsos, Venuses galore, Madonnas  
Gathered by thousands in long galleries.  
It is a strange face this, in many ways —  
Look at the mouth, somewhat effeminate  
With its twin-cupid bows, and those slight curves  
Turned inward at the corners, not the face  
Of one who battles much, a dreamer's rather  
Who feels resentment 'gainst a world whose rules  
Enforce the need of conflict — those strange eyes  
Can blaze at times, I think, and sulk as well,  
Not quite a pleasant character, all told —  
Disposed to rage against the powers that be,  
Too much inclined to point the fault, to brood,  
Contemning life not ordered to his taste;  
The hair shows that, its very manner speaks  
Defiance in the face of common facts —  
He struggled bitterly, you say? One sees  
The traces in the mouth, a cynic sneer  
Lurks there for the unfortunate who dares

## THE PORTRAIT

Appraise too glibly, speculate on life  
With cheerful faith, and bank-book optimism;  
And what conceit! — a thing I much admire  
If not too much in evidence. You smile,  
I see, and think I do him wrong, indeed  
It may be so, I do not know the man  
But if the fairy godmothers at birth  
Were parsimonious, they gave me this —  
The gift to read a face! ”

So critic one  
Judges the portrait, and the portrait's source,  
Then starts to find how time has flown, jumps up  
And hurries to a club lunch where the Major  
Waits friendly help to damn the Government.  
Well, and the portrait judged, what satisfaction  
Have you or I, for some one lies — your hand,  
My face, or critic one — God knows in truth  
I am no person such as he discerned,  
And so — the critic lies, if not — the portrait,  
Who shall appoint the blame? Why! critic two!  
Listen, he climbs the stone steps, not a man  
Inclined to hurried action, regular feet  
Are these, bespeaking calm, deliberation;  
The frosted panels of your studio door



## THE PORTRAIT

Reflect his shadowy silhouette a space  
Before the knuckle whitens on the glass.  
He greets you with an air not grown perfunctory,  
And takes the chair you offer, then unwinds  
The muffler at his throat, unbuttons, spreads  
His hands revealing thin white fingers, frail  
As any nun's held up in act of prayer.  
We like this man, as much as one can like  
The acquiescent temperament and face  
That smiles on good and evil, nay, denies  
Such thing miscalled, for "error" is its name  
Smilingly he will tell you, with a grace  
Which only childlike innocence could maintain.  
His bearing, like a tree in summer state  
Soft-singing to the tender breeze which plays  
Amid the leaves whispering in alarm,  
Is deferential yet withal is strong;  
Oppose him, he will smile, give way so far  
And with a fine resilience swing back,  
As the tall elm that from the raging storm  
Released, asserts its former majesty.  
He will not understand your tale of woe,—  
All outward things are ruled by inner thought,  
Control that force the world is yours to shape,

## THE PORTRAIT

He tells you; all the while stark poverty,  
Ugliness, disease and crime confront him  
And yet he cannot, or he will not see them,  
For seeing would corrupt the thought; and so  
The portrait finds no critic of its flaws,  
But one whose task is to assess, reveal,  
Dilate upon its qualities, and make  
Careful deductions full of kindly thought;  
But first there will be silence — then —

“ Well done! —

This is most delicate, as soft as bloom  
Blurring the peach, and those deep lustrous eyes  
Are lucid as the dew on pansy petals —  
Light backed with velvet darkness; what a touch,  
A happy touch that shadow on the temple;  
This face seems all alive with thought, and sweet  
Ingenuous emotion — not of one  
Who ever let a base desire corrupt  
The soul, but pure, of infant innocence,  
Reflected in his poems. Have you read  
Those tender little lyrics that he wrote  
In — what's the title of the last book out? —  
Well, here's the source of all their wistfulness,  
Their grace and soft tranquillity, akin

## THE PORTRAIT

With moonlight and a wide and starry sky.  
Though I have heard things, this face looks on joy  
More often than on sorrow, what you say  
I know is true — these ills of life distract  
A mind so sensitive, but what are they  
To one with soul so dominant; the head  
Reveals the thinker throned above the jars  
And frets of life, walled in by petty cares.  
You triumph in this portrait, having found  
The spirit underneath the flesh, the part  
Most perdurable, for the whole thing shows  
The living soul beneath the outward guise.  
This is no worlding-face, no passion here  
But peace unbounded like an arctic plain  
Of wide, immortal and untrodden snows.  
You have been faithful — and the mortal man  
Marked with the storm you have not shown, in-  
deed

This is no portrait in a sense which deems  
Resemblance to its subject the first rule,  
Many will see no verisimilitude,  
But what of that? — ‘the Soul,’ Art cries, ‘show  
that!’

And you have shown it!”

## THE PORTRAIT

Thus spake critic two  
And when he went, with gentle smile, and firm  
Warm pressure of your hand, what thought you  
then?

Strangely confused you were, I think, for how  
Could the artistic temperament derive  
Pleasure from praise that so neglected art?

"No verisimilitude!" he said, the words  
Are censure in one form, the eye and hand  
Have failed in their first office to portray  
The subject of the portrait; life-like? "No!"

Our friend says, and you chafe, the compliment  
Was doubtful. Ah, my friend, you must resolve  
What is the true criterion of Art,—

To show the living man, that all cry out  
At first glance, "'Tis the poet, you remember,  
He lectured last month at the Assembly rooms!"

Or prove the connoisseur — philosopher —  
Reveal the soul, the animating spirit,  
Neglecting the resemblances of flesh?

Perhaps the best way beyond all contention  
Is that combining truth with introspection —  
Give likeness both to life and soul at once?

Which, think I, you have done, friend. Do not  
doubt

## THE PORTRAIT

The artist knows his own creation best,  
As any mother at a glance detects  
Her own child at a crêche where strangers' eyes  
See infants all alike, all featureless!  
We live in fear of misconception, friend,  
And yet all great work must precede the age  
Capable of its recognition; take  
Galileo for instance, when he dared,  
Infidel preposterous, to assert  
The Earth moved round the Sun, confounding  
God,  
And all the prophets — then a war of theories,  
Ptolemaic 'gainst the Copernican,  
Pope, Church and Inquisition, bulls, decrees  
And recantation under torture; truth  
Has always suffered crucifixion, friend!  
But we progress, withal, none now to laugh  
Poor blind Galileo to scorn! ah, you,  
We, artists all, walk lonely in our way.

The critics one and two gave little help,  
Both saw the portrait, each misjudged in part  
Model no less than artist; now, once more,  
Hear critic three, a lady this who calls,  
A person of *bon ton* — and titled too!

## THE PORTRAIT

Who has not seen and worshipped Lady Jane? —  
Since that first day Sir Roland brought her home  
To famishing estate and crumbling grange,  
The relics of a past magnificence;  
She came, and in a throng of parvenus,  
Brewers and druggists, merchants one remove  
From small shop vendors — no disgrace appends  
To low beginnings, rather credit, save  
The ladder is not scorned and kicked away  
And knighthood purchased as a gilt for dross —  
'Mid such a throng she moves, outdazzled quite,  
Like a small diamond in a world of paste,  
But known and valued truly all the same.  
Yet diamonds have their flaws, and she, in truth,  
No less reveals defects of quality.  
These charity parades, these matinées —  
My lady in her box is billed no less  
Than famous actress — patron one, the other  
Performer, yet both seek the public gaze,  
Both qualified by merit to appeal,  
The one by gifts, the other by her birth.  
Is it not strange, friend, how Duke this, Lord that  
Are personages just because a crowd  
Will flock to stare at them; suppose my Lord,



## THE PORTRAIT

Billed as a patron, takes his box and sits  
In public view — and no one comes to view,  
Who is my lord then? — sad to think, a mere  
Useful or useless man, no more, no less —  
The patent of nobility's the crowd!

My Lady Jane knows this, reveals herself,  
Speaks, patronises just enough to whet  
The common curiosity, no more —  
Then holds aloof, position thus acknowledged.  
I am not kind to speak her faults, but there,  
So much we all know, and that known, the rest  
Is testimony to her tender heart,  
Sweet face and eyes, and ears for pity's call.  
Now let her judge the portrait. Pause awhile,  
Those seven-storey stairs take all the breath.  
“So you have finished it! I like the pose,  
There is a regal calm about that brow,  
Sloping to shadow, and the eyes are good,  
But do you know, I think there is a want  
Of wistfulness? — those eyes are laughing now,  
They may be true to life. From all I hear  
This poet shares the madness of his race  
Which half excuses his wild escapades —  
You did not know . . .? — you modern Stylites,

## THE PORTRAIT

Brick-pillared in the clouds, seven-storey high,  
Art checks all converse with your fellow-men! —  
Forgive me, I should not have mentioned this,  
Maybe ill-natured gossip takes his name  
As a distaff to wrap its scandal round,  
But those eyes look the part, I must admit.  
This portrait fascinates me, first, because  
It is a work of art, and secondly  
One now can study every line and read  
The truth of this strange face. I saw him once  
At an At Home — he read a poem there,  
And as he syllabled the words, it seemed  
As if a music fell upon our ears,  
Not speech, nor sound alone, nor wholly sense  
But joy and sorrow, peace and pain, all these —  
A spirit that made silence eloquent  
With dim rich memories, and gave to words  
A music that with healing sought our ears,  
Entered our hearts, and ran through all the veins.  
We sat entranced and wondered at ourselves,  
Tried to resolve identity, to find  
What all this life meant — for a space, and then  
This necromancer broke his spell of words,  
Laughed at us for our folly, and withdrew,



## THE PORTRAIT

Tea-cup in hand, to enjoy our adoration.  
He has no modesty, he rates himself  
Among the gods of song, and takes his place  
With cool assurance 'mid the greatest names,  
And yet, strange paradox, if you speak praise  
With genuine feeling, he will smile at you  
As though he thought you mocked him. You  
have caught

Some of this insolence in the whole pose —  
The chin advanced defiant, and the mouth  
Too delicate, I think, compressed to show  
Half-veiled contempt for people of this world.  
It is a true and charming piece of work,  
You have revealed the man behind the pose."

Judgment delivered, Lady Jane has gone,  
Now are you satisfied? No? nor am I!  
Oh artist friend of mine, we well deserve  
The punishment incomprehension brings  
For asking judgment of a world so blind.  
Three critics, and three verdicts! Ask no fourth,  
For truth is not in numbers; who would think  
So many portraits, each one different,  
Three pairs of eyes could conjure from one  
frame;

## THE PORTRAIT

And yet the portrait does not lie, no fault  
Is yours, my friend; the work is true and good —  
Remember that the model suffers too!  
What am I, dreamer, hypochondriac,  
True-souled revealer of the heavenly things  
By virtue of a childish innocence,  
Gay mocker, with a cynic-sneer, or what —  
Posturing fool that apes the mighty man?  
Three critics saw three portraits, but their words  
Spoke of a dozen men, and never me!

Here is excuse to diagnose myself  
And play the egotist that Lady Jane  
Avers I am — but for a while I stand  
Behind the portrait, let it speak for me;  
What does it say for its original?  
Has Art revealed in subtle shade and line  
The underplay of nerves, emotion, thought  
Which makes expression, and presents the face  
Stamped o'er with vice or virtue for the world  
To read at sight? Ah, friend, your task is hard,  
For words, light-spoken words, die with the breath  
That brought them forth, but all your work re-  
mains

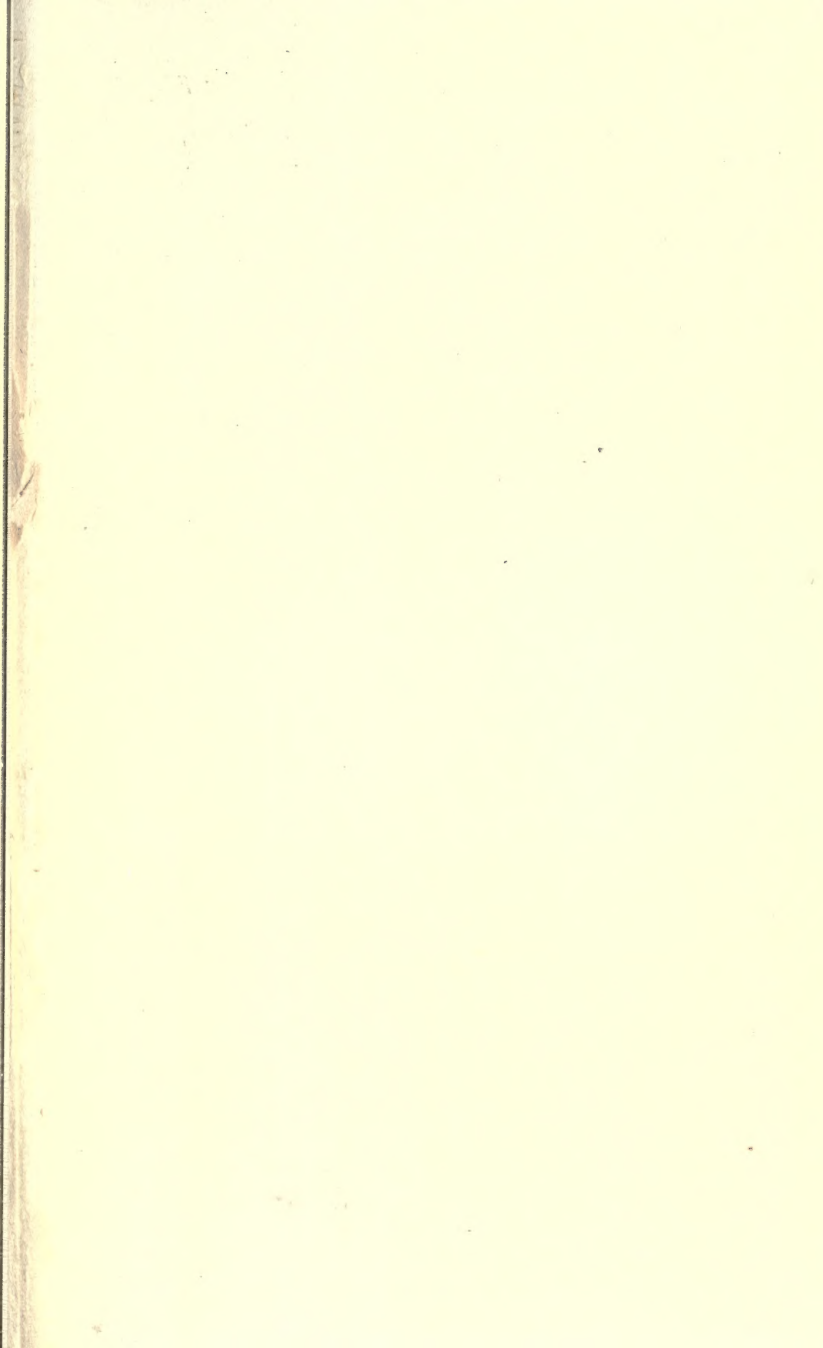
## THE PORTRAIT

A witness how you spoke — this line, this shade  
Will tell their story, and the judgment holds  
If your hand gossiped while it drew, allowed  
The scandal in its curve to damn the face;  
The lie remains, for whoso sees will read  
Not truth, but your translation from the flesh.  
Your task is hard, indeed; three critics saw  
A portrait, which is mine; the fourth, the artist,  
Drew it,— you are a critic just as they,  
Drawing to judgment of the eye; and now  
Speaks critic five — the true original.  
And I am most perplexed. Four critics saw  
Four characters within one face — the fifth  
Is no less sure to fail, let me confess;  
Much wisdom came from Greece — one proverb  
said,  
“Man, know thyself!” — the comprehensive  
sage  
Found Truth's dilemma when he uttered that,  
For what we are none knows, nor ever will —  
Birth, Death, Soul, Mind, Thought — embryonic  
words,  
Metaphors of a truth beyond our ken:  
Wherefore, how often must we fail in sight

## THE PORTRAIT

Both to perceive and to record the truth  
Through mists of prejudice, and colourings  
Of temperament; each setting of the sun  
Records its daily self not twice alike.  
Here, then, the secret of our portrait, friend,  
You saw and made it as you saw, your truth  
May differ in the eyes of critic one  
As his in those of critic two and three,  
And yet you have not failed but triumphed — this  
I know and feel, now, as with face to face  
I read my features through your eyes, attain  
The broader view from vantage ground of yours;  
Thus you fulfil your office, with your hand  
Make mirrors for mankind to see itself.

THE END





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